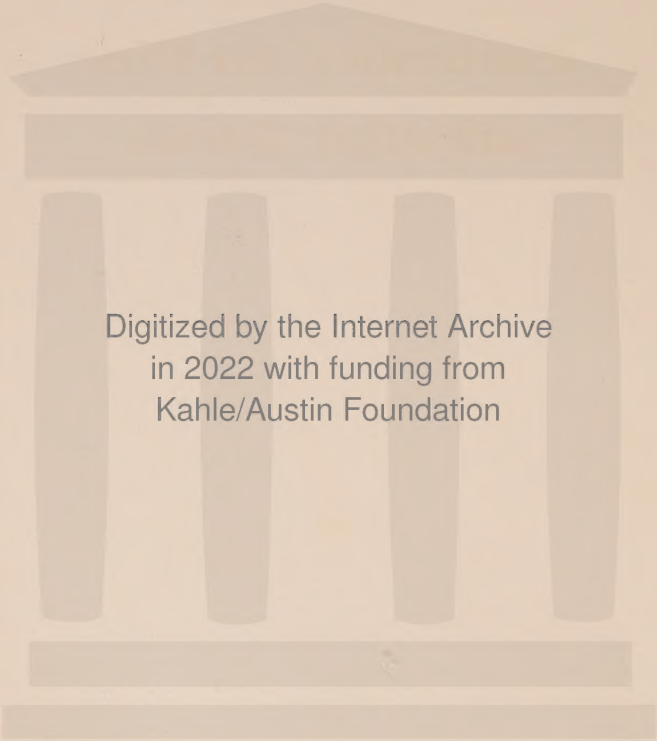
Lanterns of the Blue and other Poems

John D. Walshe, S. J.



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Lanterns of the Blue and other Poems

By

Rev. John D. Walshe, S.J.

Author of

"The Vision Beatific"

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LANTERNS OF THE BLUE
AND OTHER POEMS

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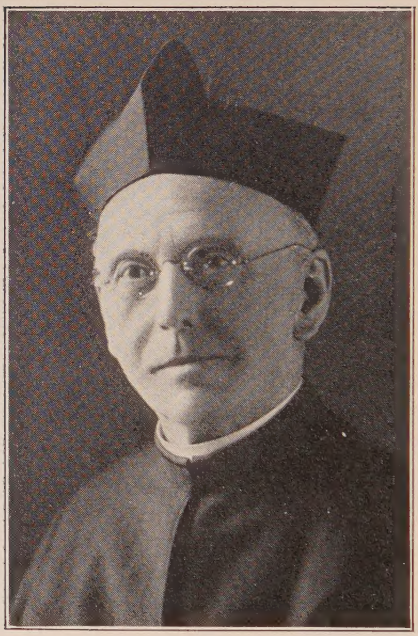

Rev. John D. Walshe, S. J.

Foreword

It is now some six or seven years since Father Walshe came before the public with The Vision Beatific, and was accepted as a poet. He is now presenting a second volume, which will, no doubt, receive a welcome equal to that which was given to the first.

Like its predecessor, the book has a purpose. Its author thinks better of his art than to employ it in merely clothing the concept with external ornaments of diction and style. Art for art's sake is not the principle that moves his pen.

Yet though the thought, profitable to the soul, comes first of all, the expression giving it life is not ignored. At first sight the verse appears simple and spontaneous. Yet it has experienced the "labor limae," the slow polishing of the file. Long ago the author learned from the great Master of the art of simplicity to reprove the haste which would publish before the tenth revision.

A century ago there was a religious poet whom Tennyson praised as "Him who sings to one clear harp in divers tones." So, too, Father Walshe, though his Christian instrument is one, his themes are various, as are the true human interests leading to the one end which gave the matter of his first song, The Vision Beatific.

December 3, 1929
Feast of St. Francis Xavier, S. J.

Henry Woods, S. J. Ph. D.,
Emeritus Professor of Ethics,
University of Santa Clara

LANTERNS OF THE BLUE

I

'TWAS eventide.—The mantle of the night
Fluttered its sable fringes o'er the deep.
In solemn hush the air was held in thrall.
Not any sound the awesome stillness brake
Save ocean's mystic crooning, measured by
His rhythmic pulse-beat on the golden strand.
From heaven, serene in azure beauty, came
A witching call, its mysteries to explore.
Yon pencilings of light with fairy tints,
Traced fine as gossamer or spider's silk,
Herald the rising moon, meek Dian fair,
In all her queenly loveliness. How fast
She climbs yon topmost peak and mounts the sky,
Bathing the world in argent lambency;
While Hesperus at her side is glowing bright—
As lovely as a rosebud newly born.

II

Now, one by one, the stars begin to steal
From hiding in the deeps of azure space,
And twinkle their delight from diamond eyes.
Expands before my gaze the star-sprayed blue
In all the glory of its pageantry.
The constellations glorious spread themselves,
From Northern Star to glowing Southern Cross,
Upon the face of the broad firmament
In limpid ether set. How pure, how sweet,
And yet how soft withal their lustrous sheen!
Beside your glories, O ye gorgeous heavens!
Earth's boasted beauties wholly melt away.

III

Thou open Book of the Almighty Hand!
Thine every shining page at once proclaims
The endless marvels of His skill divine—
The miracles of His Omnipotence.

Gaze on that Book in contemplation rapt!
Let awe and admiration surge thy breast
Within—until the soul exalted, fired
To ecstasy, breathes forth its rapturous praise
Of the Creator and His wonder-works!
O Stars! a homily transcendent ye!
A tome of wisdom, and a depthless fount
Of inspiration to the soul of man.
Your holy light invokes him to contemn
The sordid and terrene, infusing him
With the sublimity of thoughts divine.

Yea, God's Evangels are ye unto men;
Mute voices preaching the Eternal Word;
Proclaimers of His beauty, wisdom, skill,
His boundless sway and providence o'er all.
O, who can number ye or sound your names?
Who chant your wondrous, hallowed influence
Upon the souls of all the sons of men?

IV

Ahungered is the soul within my breast
To list the hallowed anthems of the spheres
And sense the magic thrill of star-born song.
To search the star-writ skies in quest of lore
And feel the pulsings of God's Universe.
Oh! would that I might reach famed Hercules
With all his hundred thousand burning suns!
Or him that in his grandeur far outshines
All other constellations of the heavens,
Renowned Orion, huge of warrior form,
Attended by your ever-faithful hound,
While from your studded girdle hangs your sword!
Your vassals' blazing torches round about,
Right royally you stand, a Prince indeed.
What bliss to mount up to the Pleiades—
That sister starry band—and list unto
Their tender elegy, so sweetly sung
In mournful dirge for the unwonted loss
Of Sterope, their seventh sister star—
Her loveliness a golden memory.

V

How oft my heart with sighing was full sore,

When upward gazing on the Milky Way,
To fly on wings of light and tread unlost
The mazes of its wildering labyrinths.
Bright Galaxy! Star-blossoms of the skies,
Thick-strewn by the Creator's bounteous Hand!
A very wilderness of blazing gems
That, like a wreath of crystal splendor, flings
Its winding light about the Northern blue.
A phosphorescent arch athwart the sky—
Colossal arch of grandeur unsurpassed
Whose elements are starry streams and swarms
And clusters—spanning all the universe.

VI

But see! the heavens are bending down in love.
With all their million sparkling eyes they peer
Into my soul, and set it full ablaze.
In tones endearing hear them call to me:
"Be brave of soul, dear child; ascend! ascend!"
Oh! who could see those heavenly spheres and hark
That call celestial and not yearn to climb?

Then, up and on! Let nothing stay my course!
From star to star my joyous flight I'll wing,
E'en up perchance to heaven's crystal wall.
Where skies are deepest sapphire, there's my home.
I bound into my swift-winged ship of air—
Away! away!—Dull, sin-stained earth, adieu!
The sky is now my goal.
Free, free am I
As flying barb that spurns the turf beneath;
Free as the cataract's madding waters wild;
Or as the chainless winds that sweep the seas.

VII

How quick recedes the earth beneath my plane!
Cliffs, towers and hills are waning fast away.
Hark! strains of music fill the ambient air.
Is it the fabled Israfel that sings—
That angel-bard whose "heart-strings are a lute"?
My craft floats nigh a skylark pouring forth,
Into the listening ear of dusk, the last

And richest gushes of his vesper song;
Which might be likened, for a verity,
To the lisped orisons of innocence
That fall so sweet upon the ear of God.

Still on I fly in skies unknown and strange,
Nor reck I aught of safety or return.

What masses nebulous sail here and yon,
Like floating racks of star-enmeshing snow!
Now burst ten thousand clusters on the view
Of shooting stars and blazing aerolites;
All iris hues are there. A glorious sight!
Lo! hither comes an orb of brilliancy—
A seething globe of fire athwart my path.
About to strike me, like a bomb it burst,
Irradiating space with luminous shards
That intermingle every tint and hue.
What tongue or pen that scene can e'er depict?
What artist's brush its brilliancy portray?

VIII

Ay, softer than doth steal the gondola
Along the smooth and blue Venetian wave
The Moon, with glory crowned, is gliding on;
She floats before me in a silvery sea.
How gloriously she sheds to earth a path
Of magic silver beams for elves to tread!
Shall this tired bark—O, lovely one!—ne'er reach
Thy radiant shore? My spirit's ardent hopes
Shall they be dashed to earth—foiled utterly?
Must I return no wiser than before?
How oft, alas! the bitter treads upon
The heels of sweet—and laughter ends in tears.

IX

Thus pondering, a force invisible
Encompassed me—aye, reached into my soul
Till suddenly I find myself endowed
With most unwonted powers. So buoyantly
I feel, so lost to sense of gravity,
I utterly discard my aerocraft;
E'en as the gorgeous summer butterfly

Disdains her darksome, prison chrysalid.
Amazed I stand—on what? On what doth stand
The sky? Or what supports the ponderous orbs?
The Will Divine, that made all out of nought,
Can change or flint to air or air to flint.
With trusting faith, on pinions of desire,
O'er beams of light all-spirit-like I fly
To ope the silver portals of the Moon.

X

Meanwhile, how big she looms as I advance!
Intenser waxes her beflooding light.
I clearly now perceive her convex form.
Her league-long rifts and fissures luminous
Which wind along, like shining silver rills,
Through plains immense, become discernible.
Lo! forests vast affording sheltering shade,
And verdant islands set in shimmering seas—
As near approach would fain assure the eye.

Here let me gladly hover for a while
Above those steep and frowning cliffs that guard
So well the "Sea of calm Serenity."
Those amphitheatres and craters vast
Of Archimedes and Autolycus
And noted Tycho I shall float above;
And "with inspection deep" consider each.

XI

What lunar Alps and Apennines arise,
Whose towering foreheads seem to touch the sky!
While down their cragged sides the avalanche
In mad delight leaps to the steep crevasse,
What ring-shaped mountains, too, on every hand,
While all are monarched by Copernicus
That, crowned in radiant beauty, glorious shines!
Yon moon-Sierras easily o'ertop
The proudest Himalayas, lofty-browed.
Lo! vasty plains and valleys broad extend,
Encircled by a rampart-chain of rocks
That rear defiant fronts, like fortresses.
The chasm abysmal of famed Pluto's ring,
Whose secrets guarded lie in darkness dense,

Down into which no sunbeam ever strayed—
Undaunted, I shall enter to explore.

Yon broad deep vale, with emerald mountains ringed,
Lonely and silent, may, in eons fled,
Have surged with life where nature's cloak of green
Now hides a vanished city's sepulchre.
That mound which "strews the wilderness" with stone,
Marks it the once proud site of temple grand?
And yon plateau—did it mayhap uphold
A palace, forum or a citadel?

XII

Proceeds my exploration of the Moon:
On gladsome wing I circle this fair orb
While leisurely I read its story graved
In super-grandeur on its rocky face.
Its obverse side, which never scans the earth,
But close conceals itself from mortal view,
I haply gaze upon and contemplate.
What untold beauties new and scenes sublime
And what exuberance of leaf and bloom
Shed smiles of welcome on my glad approach!
Above its sparkling seas I rise and soar;
On buoyant wing I fly from strand to strand;
I tread their coral floors, by human foot
Unpressed, to seek some trace of finny life.

Amazed, I view its craters manifold;
Of size stupendous, fathomless in depth.
Into the wide cavernous jaws of one—
Say Tycho or Theophilus—hurl down
The largest crater of the planet Earth,
And instant from the view it disappears;
As pebble into pool by infant thrown,
Or minnow swallowed whole into the maw
Of some enormous monster of the main.

XIII

But, oh! what glorious panorama this!—
Ten thousand granite columns, obelisks,
Spires, minarets and domes—gigantic all,
And shaped fantastic by the Deity's

Volcanic chisel; all enrobed are they
In sun-tints, mingling, melting, varying ever—
The heavenly vault the background, velvet sable,
O'er spangled with a myriad glittering stars.
Lo! full-orbed splendor opens to the view—
How wild my bosom throbs! My swelling soul
Would fain itself outpour in praise to Him
Whose endless loveliness is imaged here—
To Him who dowered with being moon and stars
That in their watches gladly give their light,
And love to shed for Him their glorious rays.

XIV

"O, twinkling stars," I cry, "that fashioned were
In flaming forge of God's Omnipotence!
And scattered with profusion by His Hand—
As seed is showered in the glebe of Spring—
Till, thick as sparkling gems of morning dew,
Ye throng the fields of heaven, flashing joy
The whole expanse around; and clarion-like
I hear ye call on man to hymn His praise.

"O, grateful stars and suns that daily sang
Your morning matins, noonday lauds, and eve's
Sweet vesper song to nature's Sovereign King,
Long ere the first primrose or violet smiled,
In Eden's bowers, to greet the primal pair
Fresh-moulded into beauty, life and joy.

XV

"Tell me, ye planets, stars and burning suns!
Are ye not temples of the living God
Where incense ceaseless burns; and where resound
Angelic anthems to the King of Kings?
Bright sentinels are ye of heaven's coast
That keep your faithful watch o'er sleeping earth
While looking down, with pity's brimming eyes,
On human folly, vanity, conceit!

"O, blessed stars that gemmed the midnight sky
And gazed with all your wonder-beaming eyes,
And joined your silver voices tenderly

With those of the angelic hosts who sang
Glad tidings to the shepherds of the hills
That sweet and ever-hallowed Christmas night!"

XVI

But let me hence, new wonders to enjoy!
Yet not in ways direct shall lie my path;
Full care-free, buoyant, jòyous I shall fly
In sweeping curves and multivaried routes
From star to star as inspiration prompts.

With pleasurable wonder I survey
The rosy-tinted planet Mercury—
Next-neighbor to the regal orb of day.
And then to Venus I direct my flight,
To Venus of the witching silver beam
That seems, from earth, a molten diamond's fire—
Fair Hesperus of the sweet evening ray,
Or Cephalus that heralds rosy dawn
Above the mountain tops with shining spear—
The famous "Shepherd's Star" that shone and burned
In the great Master-Minstrel's glowing soul
Till he enshrined its peerless fire within
His matchless and immortal Iliad.

XVII

Through fields of sapphire once again I wing
My flight direct unto a golden sphere
With flaming glory lighting up the heavens.
The life-sustainer 'tis of man and beast
And plant and flower and all that thrives on earth.
Behold the Sun! Imperial orb of day!
With grand "Corona" crowned, whose jutting points
Are lustrous "Prominences" that daze the sight,
Updarting fiery tongues of crimson gold!
Yea, countless radiant tongues of living flame
Leap from his fiery crown, and dart along
Into the void of purple infinite.
What wonder if—as legends love to tell—
The great Memnonian statue of fair Thebes
Was wont to waft to thee, O Sun, at dawn
The soulful incense of sweet melody!

Pray who of mortal men that ever gazed
In wonder on his gorgeous rise or set
And has not felt the heart within his breast
Aye, burn and yearn, that royal path of rays
To upward scale into his palace home;
And there his golden treasures all survey,
And trace the source of those his deathless fires
And everlasting beams of magic light?
But, oh! my heart's desire is now attained!
High swells my soul with loving gratitude
To Him, the mighty Architect and Builder,
Who, by His fiat, in the firmament
Hung it ablaze, man's mortal pilgrimage
To vivify, cheer, nurture and illume.

XVIII

My flight renewed, an orb as ruby bright
Seems to approach, enthralling in its beam.
A wondrous planet, styled fierce crimson Mars;
Albeit his poles white-mantled are with snow.
I joyous sweep around the Martian sphere,
Subjecting it the while to narrow search.
I ride his swift-winged ebon mountain clouds
And tempest fierce, that into madness lash
His lakes and seas, and spill his vexed canals.
But breathe there truly living beings on Mars—
Man, beast or bird? And find we tree and flower,
Green vale and hill, and sapphire oceans there?
What erst on earth has haunted me in dreams,
And vaunting science has in vain essayed—
All, all I now can see and understand.

XIX

Then Jupiter, regarded lovingly
By all the solar planets as their brother—
Their big protecting brother; if transformed
Perchance, methinks, into a hollow shell,
More than a thousand earths could hide within.
What joy to view him gloriously endowed
With equatorial bands and silver moons—
Nine lively moons, while earth but one can boast!
What "floating spot" is that upon his face,

Now red, now pink—a continent in bulk,
As if all Ind were on the seas afloat?
But oh! to view his mass of mountain-clouds
At strife with the contending hurricanes—
Like to embattled armies locked in war—
Their arms red lightning and the thunderbolt!

Now on to Saturn like a flash of light!
That wonder of the skies, that fills the eye
With admiration while it spurs the sides,
Without surcease, of Curiosity—
That planet in its rich adornment set
Of brilliant satellites and jeweled rings,
Within whose vastnesses our little earth
Might lose itself as 'twere a tennis ball.

XX

Now Vega beckons—Vega of the Lyre—
The brightest sphere in all the northern sky:
Thou charming Lyra with thy lamp of blue,
Tinting with azure the celestial arch.

Wondrous Antares next awaits my call,
Antares of the alternating hue—
As watchers of the starry field aver—
Now lily-white, now blushing rosy red.
Is it that some kind angel in the orb
Sends down alternate showers of molten gold
And silver—to keep rich and full the veins
And arteries of bounteous Mother Earth?

See! fair Arcturus floats into my ken—
Arcturus which, among the stars endowed
In regions of the blue with fixed abode,
Resplendent shines with fadeless constancy.
Beckons to me that luminary bright
Called Stella Mira, or the "Wonder Star,"
Since, like a midnight sprite, 'twill sudden flash
Before the eye—then vanish from the view.
Like to a bird-song warbled from the fen—
A few soft notes at broken intervals,
Flashes of music on the ear of night.

XXI

As arrow to the targe, or lightning bolt
From out a cloud surcharged—so speed I now
Straight toward a regal star in lofty space;
Celestial lamp of scintillating ray.
Pole-Star to earthly pilgrims it is known.
Its Maker bade it rule the northern sky,
And—like a recluse lone to wisdom given—
Shed guiding light on wanderers of the wild,
And kindly blessings on a slumbering world.
"O, beauteous star!" I cry, "how oft have I
From far upon thy midnight splendor gazed
Till thou didst burn within my very soul!
And did I not in dreams soar up to thee
And mingle with the glory of thy beams?"

XXII

Still newer stellar systems greet the eye,
In that of "Alpha Centauri," twin suns,
Concentric in their paths, unite their powers
To rule their planetary satellites.
While suns more numerous, of varied hue,
In other systems rule and vivify
Their swift revolving planets, holding each
And all like steeds to their appointed course.

And thus, as bent inclines, from orb to orb
I roam, exploring each with keen delight.
At my approach each star a welcome gives—
Flings wide its silver-shining gates, fast closed
Against all denizens of earthly mold.
Each field of light, each emerald hill and dale,
Each crystal fount in ecstasy I view.
From antipode to antipode I glide.
I break the seals of long-sought mystic lore,
And glean the well-kept secrets of the skies.

XXIII

In distance dim, ethereal seas among,
Behold a gorgeous sight! A Comet huge,
Of train enormous, decked with flowing locks,
Speeds on its fiery way and covers half

The heaven with flying erubescent showers.
E'en as a fount whose dancing waters fall
In streams of light, on Oriental flowers,
Bright-vesting them in iris-tinted spray.

Who has not marked that oft, in northern climes,
The earliest feather-flake descending soft
Is but the prelude of the coming storm?
So thus the Comet but the herald proved,
Or bright forerunner of a grand display.
A host of Comets speed across the sky,
Tracing in mystic characters of fire
Their histories for God's elect to read.

XXIV

Beyond those Comets in the extreme of space,
Out thro' the immensitude of heaven's expanse,
On loftier wing I now shall joyous speed—
Nor ever shall I rest my lightning-plumes
Till I have reached those forests without end
Of stars and suns, ne'er viewed by mortal eyes—
Mysterious worlds beyond the reach of thought.
Their number and their size, I ask myself.
Yea, count the blades of grass, the summer leaves,
The sands of all the seas—then might I hope
To number o'er these planets, stars and suns.
In magnitude; so huge are they of bulk
The sun I have explored, if placed beside
The least of these, would seem a mustard-seed.

In such far ether-spaces were they placed
By the Creative Hand, their variant lights
That have been journeying at headlong speed
Since nature's birth, not yet have reached
Their midway path to earth. Those, too, there be,
Whose witching rays are fated ne'er to touch
The sphere terrene, nor e'er be seen of men.

XXV

Lo! Heaven has lost the brightness of her smile;
Thick ebon clouds enshroud her radiant brow.
She sudden dons a lowering front, while Wrath

Thereon sits high enthroned.—Wherefore, that burst
Of blinding light that rudely smote mine eyes?
Those deafening detonations 'mong the clouds?
Behold red meteorites and asteroids
In countless numbers pierce the darkling skies!

Creation's sweet accord is snapped in twain—
I see confusion on confusion piled.
The myriad orbs their fixéd paths desert
And headlong dash, confusion-mad, across
Astounded skies. No more, alas! resounds
Their psalmody, for Harmony's fair soul—
E'en she whose heavenly eyes are calm and sweet—
Being panic-struck, takes instant wing—is fled.
While hell-born Discord—with disheveled locks,
Red fiery eyes, and restiveness of gait—
Rude seizes on the spheres, obsession-like,
Until Creation's ears are jarred and split
With hideous din discordant, terror-fraught.

This scene of horror—what doth it portend?

* * * * *

Thou, Lord Omnipotent, whose ruling hand
Doth all things guide with wisdom infinite;
Whose Providence paternal reaches sweet
From end to end through all the universe;
Whose Spirit vivifies, whose Power sustains—
Dost Thou, forgetful, turn Thy face aside;
And suffer Thy creation wide to lapse
Into its own primeval nothingness?

* * * * *

XXVI

Among the constellations far and wide
Ring out the trumpet notes of mighty Mars.
Now clash the spheres—rebound, collide again—
Mid lightnings wild and linked thunderbolts;
Bursting with mighty crash and deaf'ning peal,
Ay, peal on peal, in one continuous roar
That rends the hollow concave wide apart;
While blazing fragments rain in endless showers

Of iron hail that cast a crimson pall
Upon the wreck and cataclysm of worlds,
Now planets, comets, suns together clash—
And clashing mingle in a fiery mass.
The sky's ablaze! One ocean vast of fire!
To which earth's cyclones, floods, sirocco's blasts
And vulcan fires, are things inconsequent.
The elements throughout, one fury holds
That must perforce unhinge the universe.
To primal chaos all has quick returned
Where dwells disorder sempiternally.

* * * * *

XXVII

So direful waxed the horrid, awesome sight,
Billows of terror rise to whelm my soul,
As ague-struck I tremble every joint;
The beaded sweat is coursing down my face;
Forsakes me all my former buoyancy.
With leaden weight I feel myself dragged down
Into the gaping, seething, bottomless abyss—
The chasm, O God! of universal ruin!
I stifle, gasp—"Omnipotent! O save—"
The anguish of my cry unseals mine eyes,
Startling me back amain to conscious life.
I wake—I rise—my wonder-dream is o'er!

Upward I gaze into the silent blue:
Enfolded are the heavens in gentle peace;
The twinkling stars are sweetly smiling down,
Proclaiming still unto the sons of men
The All-Unfailing Providence of God.

Finis

TO HER I LOVE BEST

HERE'S a woman I love beyond tongue could declare;
She is all the wide world to me,
Her gentle smile vanished, this land were a void
From whose gloom I would eagerly flee.

Yet her summer day's past, and the autumn of life
Is beginning to silver her hair
And to dim that bright vision whose lustre serene
With Hesperus once might compare.

Oh! I know there are dames far more youthful and grand
With beauty and riches galore,
Bejeweled, brocaded, as stately as queens—
You may find them on every shore,

As they all pass before me in brilliant array,
Each in grandeur surpassing the other,
Not one—no, not all ta'en together could fill
The place of my own darling MOTHER.

MY NATIVE COT

HEAVEN'S blessings on the dear old cot
Where first I saw the day.
How far I've wandered from the spot
To half a world away!
Full fifty years and more have sped
Since thee I bade adieu;
Though passed had cycles o'er my head,
My heart would warm to you.

Fond memory with her magic wand
Each feature brings to me—
The boreen, rath and rush-ringed pond,
The osiers waving free,
The purling rill, the emerald mead
Where larks their nestlings hide,
The clover patch where rabbits feed
And think themselves unspied;

The winding path to fairy dell
Where springs the shamrock green
And circling willows shade the well
With roses wild between.
Across the land and o'er the sea—
Tho I be all forgot—
This heart of mine goes out to thee,
My native Irish cot.

SMILE ON THE FACE OF THE DEEP

THE pages of Nature to read
How sweet, as we wander along
The vale with its flower-spangled mead,
Its bird-trill and rivulet song!

Yet the fields of the ocean I crave
And the lore that its caverns keep—
Aye, give me the blue-dimpling wave,
And the smile of the face of the deep.

I yearn for the tang of the spray,
As my bark like a seabird takes wing,
And the breezes that waft me away
Make the heart of me cheerily sing.

How grand when the tempests arise
And the storm is enthroned on the main,
Mad-tossing its waves to the skies
To be caught to its bosom again.

Then hark to the dash and the roar
Of the steeds of old Neptune at play
As they sweep to the steep frowning shore,
To be hurled into mountains of spray.

L'Envoi

The winds have returned to their caves
And are resting like lions asleep—
Thrice-welcome, ye blue-dimpling waves
And the smile of the face of the deep.

THE HEART

THE heart within the human breast—
Effect of God's creative word—
What is that heart when most 'tis blest?
The golden censer of the Lord.
The censer's swing, each throb of heart;
The living coals, love's fires impart.

The soul's affections, pure and deep,
Yield fragrant spices for the flame,
Whose circling perfumes upward leap
To honor God's most sacred Name.
O perfumes sweet, which far transcend
The gums of Araby or Ind!

The husbandman, the waving grain
And orchard claims with blossom bright;
The painting speaks the Artist's gain;
The chiseled form the Sculptor's right;
The poem, fraught with living fire,
He owns who strikes the poet's lyre.

So must the heart's affections all
Be His who made it pulse with life,
Nor meant it e'er to be the thrall
Of earthly love with passion rife.
How dull the flame! how dense the fumes
When low desire the soul consumes!

Swing high the thurible of love!
Cast self into the hallowed flame!
Let incense mount to God above!
The Lord Himself no more would claim.
Resound the vaults of heaven wide
In praise of hearts so deified.

RHAPSODY OF THE WAVES

I

HASTE with me
To the sunny sea
Which God's great "fiat" made for thee!
Leave cankering care
That chains you there,
And fret and moil and drudgery:
Away! Away! From care and strife
To the sea a-teeming with finny life,
All clad in gorgeous silver mail
Gliding through coral grove and dale,
Or sweeping on in circling play
'Mid ocean plants and bowers gay,
That graceful wave o'er Neptune's bed
Of pearly sands in beauty spread.

Away, and flee
To the glorious sea
With its wild, wild waves,
Not made for slaves
Of pelf and self and vanity—
To the bounding and the swaying,
To the dashing and the spraying
And the ever-tireless playing:
To the rhythm and the singing,
And the deep diapason of the waves;
To the care-effacing, soul-uplifting waves—
To the fierce wild rapture of the waves.

II

In the witching hour when the weary sun
Seeks his ocean bed, his day's work done;
In the wave he laves his brows that burn—
And, lo! to gold the bright waves turn.
'Tis the "Good-night" kiss of the King of Day,
As he seeks his couch till Aurora's ray
His eyelids touch to bid him arise
And run his course in the purple skies.
But when fast he closes his eyes in sleep,
The Queen of Night steals over the deep;

And the waves that had lost their burnished gold
Show silver bright in their every fold.
Then the twinkling stars peep down in glee
To mirror themselves in the silver sea.
When, lo! fair Dian, for a space,
Draws a misty veil o'er her radiant face,
And sable darkness grows apace.

III

As from flinty rock the living spark,
Sudden—from out the waters dark—
Bursts forth a brightly flashing light
To chase the growing gloom of night,
Phosphoric sparks from crest to crest
Fly wild along the ocean's breast;
Kindling to flame the ocean wide,
Like burning Etna's molten tide;
The billows burn—the breakers glow—
Tossing flame to heaven as on they go.
The answering heavens flash back the light,
The welkin round is dazzling bright;
While rainbow tints their charms entwine—
Fit climax to a scene divine.
The Polar Lights, have they frisked away
From allotted bounds, like elfs at play,
To gambol free 'mid the breakers' foam,
Too gay to think of returning home?
Or have sea-nymphs gathered in sportive glee
To make a gladsome jubilee?
Or is it a host of angels bright
That have stolen out in the silent night
Thro' the pearly gates of the vaulted skies,
To dance on the foam in their silver attire
And sing "Glory to God!" on their heavenly lyre—
To hearten us mortals to arise
And sunder all unholy ties
And lift our souls to heaven above
Where reign unbounded joy and love?

IV

O, Mortal Man! whosoe'er thou be,
In rapture gaze on the glorious sea—

On the sea, and the moon, and the starry night,
With sparkling glory rich bedight;
Then, with swelling breast lift thy soul above
Till it burns and glows with a seraph's love,
And pour it forth in an endless flood
Of ardent praise to the Boundless Good,
Whose Infinite Might hath all things made,
From ocean vast to tiniest blade;
Tinting with beauty every one—
The faintest reflex of His own—
Then each bright gift to man hath given
To light him home to his native Heaven.

MY ROSARY

MY Rosary! my Rosary!
What solace in my hours of woe,
In toil what sweet relief to me—
None but the child of Faith can know;
What strong encouragement of soul
To climb the steep to Virtue's goal!

Dear friend, that saw my chain of years
Glide silent by, as bead by bead;
That dried so oft life's bitter tears
By bringing aid in direst need
From thy bright Queen and mine above,
For whose sweet sake each bead I love.

O life-long Friend! be with me still
When sleeping in the silent tomb;
That sleep how all too lone and chill
Wert thou not there to break the gloom,
And bid me, hail! the morn I rise
To greet my Queen in Paradise.

THE LILY AND THE ROSE

ART thou weary of soul and faint-hearted?
Doth care weigh thee down to the earth?
Have toil and misfortune and sadness
Been thine since the day of thy birth?
Wouldst thou lighten the burden of trouble?
Wouldst thou sweeten life's labors and woes?
Look up for a moment, confiding,
To the Lily that beareth the Rose.

Anguish of soul, doth it wring thee?
Are thy hopes falling withered and dead,
Like leaves in the blast of the winter
While the heavens bend gloomy o'erhead?
Surge despair's raging billows about thee?
Yield not to thy spirit's dark foes;
But appeal, as a child to its mother,
To the Lily that beareth the Rose.

How sweet are the rose and the lily!—
The fairest of flowers that blow;
One symbols a pure, sinless nature,
And one golden charity's glow.
But *when* budded forth rose from lily?
Earth's bowers ne'er such could disclose;
When Mary gave Christ unto mortals,
The Lily gave birth to the Rose.

BARROW'S WATERS

FTTIMES in the gloaming
Sweet thoughts of the past
Revisit my spirit
With sadness o'ercast;
Then scenes most enchanting
In vision appear
Of Erin, My Country,
My Motherland dear.

In fancy I saunter
Along the green shore
Of Barrow's bright waters,
I ne'er shall see more—
Sweet Barrow, so friendly,
What pleasure was mine
Among thy green rushes
At eve to recline.

Or plunge in wild gladness
Beneath thy clear tide,
Or list to the tumult
When gales o'er thee ride,
Or watch from thy banks
On a calm summer's day,
Thy silver-scaled tenants
A-frisking at play—

Or sweep o'er thy bosom
With swift-plying oar,
That, cleaving thy waters,
Drips diamonds galore.
Let streams that wind proudly
Deep mountains among,
Or lave mighty canyons
By others be sung.—

But mine be the Barrow,
That mirrored my home,
The sad day I ventured
From Erin to roam—
Ah! Barrow, loved Barrow,
When tolls my last knell,
Shall I cease—and then only—
Thy praises to swell!

THE MASTER'S CALL

S free as mountain air
Careering with a zest,
Or the lark that flies
Through crystal skies—
The soul within my breast.

For every link that bound
That soul to earth is broken;
O'er the bounding deep
On, on I sweep;
For Christ my Lord hath spoken.

In sweetly winning tone
To my heart of hearts He spake:
"Go forth for Me
O'er land and sea,
And labor for My sake.

"From ruin snatch those souls
For whom in love I died;
Then evermore
When life is o'er
With Me in bliss abide."

The whispering thrilled my soul;
I bade adieu to home—
In life's fair Spring
Left everything—
Earth's wide expanse to roam.

No home on earth is mine—
Be mine a home in Heaven!
My only love
Be Him above
To whom my vows are given!

And can it be, sweet Spouse,
That I am Thine forever?
Yea, I am Thine
And Thou art mine;
Our hearts—O what can sever!

TO THE CHRISTMAS BABE

SWEETEST Infant, brother mine,
My Baby-brother, all divine,
Lain on the straw-strown sod!
Since you have called me "brother dear,"
Oh! why should I have aught of fear—
Though but a sinful clod—
To clasp you to my heart of bliss,
Imprint e'en one adoring kiss
And call my Brother—"God"!

The claim your Mother will concede—
Am I not too her child indeed?
Lo! List! she bids you come;
Joy! Joy! My arms enfold you now;
I reverent kiss your infant brow
"Purer than ocean foam."
Oh! rapture's tears, you well may flow;
My soul, sweet Babe, to yours shall grow
Till gathered to its home.

I gaze enraptured on your face,
I feel your answering fond embrace,
Your arms about my neck,
Your head a-nestling on my breast—
Stay, Babe, I'll give you sheltered rest
That none may rudely break!
To you I vow my life, my all,
My fealty, King—'tis all too small,
Yet spurn it not but take.

My Infant Liege! that I am Thine,
What greater joy could e'er be mine
Beneath the starry dome?
Mayhap, as Simeon of yore,
I've reached the pilgrim's farthest shore,
Nor longer would I roam;
With you my spirit fain would fly—
O barren earth, adieu! I die!
Sweet Brother! take me home.

THE BOY-SERAPH

I.

AR, far from the friends he must ne'er see again—
No mother to smooth his hard pillow of pain;
In an alien house, under bigotry's sway,
Young Stanislaus' life is fast ebbing away;
His veins drained with thirst, his soul thirsting much more
For a priest—but no priest may now enter that door,
The bread of angels to bring him—his love and his life,
And his strengthening stay in his last mortal strife,
O Kostka, dear Kostka, how ruthless is man,
To place on thy longing blind bigotry's ban!
Must thou die unembraced by thy soul's cherished Love?
No—what cold earth denies thee, grants heaven above.
What light on a sudden illumines the room,
As tho' brilliancy leaped from the dark of the tomb?
Two angels from heaven and St. Barbara are there,
Bending o'er him in sweetness, as they hold in midair
Before his blest vision the Spouse of his soul,
Of all his heart's longing the centre and goal.
Up to heaven was wrapt the apostle indeed,
But heaven comes down to this boy in his need.
In rapture he gazes on Him who once trod
This earth to become our Eucharistical God.
Now, child, He is thine, and thy heart is afire;
Thou art one with thy Jesus in deed and desire,
And now thou art ready, whene'er His behest,
To begin thy last journey with Him in thy breast.

II.

The days and the nights—oh! how tedious they glide,
For the child to and fro tossed on fever's hot tide!
His spirit that flutters 'gainst its flesh-prison bars,
How it longs to spring upward beyond the bright stars!
But again beams that light, brighter far than before—
Is it noonday escaped from eternity's shore?
O heaven of heavens! Kostka! say, can it be
That the Virgin and Child are communing with thee?
See her lay her Sweet Babe on his breast undefiled,
While the Spirit of Love hovered o'er them and smiled;
John pillowed his head a brief space on Christ's breast,

But on Kostka's Christ lies as a dove in its nest.
So unwonted the vision the celestial choirs
Amazed, ceased to sing to their heaven-tuned lyres,
For thee, blessed youth, earth possesses no charms;
What wonder since Heaven lies locked in thy arms?
O what tears of fond rapture gush forth from his eyes!
From his bosom seraphic how ardent his sighs!
His heart is wild-throbbing, his soul is on fire,
Of rapture's delight must the boy needs expire?
Nay, afresh on his cheek bloom health's roses again,
And the joy of youth's vigor throbs free in each vein.
O favored of heaven; small marvel thou'rt well;
How grateful thy bosom, let other tongues tell.

THE CHRISTIAN ATHLETE

I.

'TWAS Friday noon, the year was thirty-three,
When our dear Lord was fastened to the tree:
Then crashed the thunder, lightning flashed on high,
And darkness spread her mantle o'er the sky,
Quenched was the sun on that Good Friday noon;
Like orb of blood stood still the awestruck moon.
The timorous stars peered through this mid-day night,
And torch-like served to show the tragic sight.
Reels to and fro the earth like one in dread;
From yawning graves stalk forth the living dead;
The mountains quake, to fragments rocks are shivered;
Affrighted Man feels Nature as it quivered.
The Temple's sacred Veil is rent in twain;
The Saviour opes His dying lips in pain,
"My soul to Thee, My Father, I commend!"
The livid lightnings with the darkness blend;
All Nature, conscious as endowed with sense,
Gave signs of such unwonted violence
That Denis cried—the Areopagite—
Whose soul was flooded with a heavenly light—
"A God expires, or else this nether world
Back into night and chaos is being hurled!"

II.

In after-times, when Paul preached Christ in Greece,
Denis the truth embraced—nor would he cease
Through Gallic lands Christ's Gospel to extend;
Nor to the frowning tyrant would he bend.
Though on him pressed the weight of a hundred years,
His great strong heart knew naught of earthly fears;
When bade to worship gods of wood and stone,
"Never! I worship One true God alone."
"We soon shall see," in scorn the Emperor said;
"Ho! slaves, to torture let this fool be led!"
Valerian's lash he stood like giant oak,
Rejoiced to feel for Christ each falling stroke;
And when they tried to vanquish him by fire,
He only smiled—it was his soul's desire.

And now the tyrant other tortures tries;
In vain! Christ's noble athlete still defies.
"Ho! lictors, haste!—his head upon the block!"
Unflinching stands the Veteran as a rock;
Then meekly bows him to the headsman's stroke
While only words of pardon from him broke;
How gladly, in a generous crimson flood,
To seal the Gospel's truth he gives his blood!
His spirit mounts on high 'bove stars and sun;
The fight is fought—the Martyr's palm is won.

SARSFIELD'S MIDNIGHT RIDE

THE English troops toward Limerick
Bring up their battering train,
Which like a monster forged in hell
Defiant stalks the plain.
Ah! Limerick, thy fate is sealed—
A pall hangs o'er the land—
Yon engines of destruction dire
Thy walls shall ne'er withstand.

Brave Sarsfield heard the word of doom
In Limerick, leagues away—
"We'll give them fitting welcome, then,
Before the dawn of day."
He calls not twice, for volunteers
Would die for Erin's weal.
With heartfelt cry to God on high
They girded on their steel.

As swift they rode that fateful night
Full many a burning thought
Burst in to sear their loyal hearts
For havoc Saxon-wrought.
Their ravished land, their smoking towns,
Their altars overturned,
Their holy soggarths done to death,
Their rights God-given spurned.

Now wanes the moon, the dawn is nigh;
The enemy dreaming lies,
While vengeance throbs the Irish veins
As the bivouac they surprise.
"The password!" shouts the sentinel
To the captain of the van;
"Sarsfield's the word," the quick reply,
"And *Sarsfield is the man!*"

"To arms, to arms!" the guard alarms;
"The Irish horde is here."

"Awake! The foe!" from lip to lip
Smites shrilly on the ear.
As lightning flashing from a cloud,
Dashed from the ebbing gloom
Those Irish heroes ghostly-dim,
Like specters from the tomb.

As rolls the landslide down the slope,
Destruction in its path,
Falls Sarsfield on the reeling foe,
Flashing his blade of wrath.
The Britons make a stubborn stand—
The bloody strife is o'er—
All, save a few who wildly flee,
Lie weltering in their gore.

* * * * *

The task is done, the field is won;
Amid the mounds of slain
The volunteers stand round their chief,
Proud victors on the plain.

MY HOME

ET others laud their milder skies,
And mansions great as skill could plan,
Their chafing steeds, their liveried grooms,
And all that nurtures pride of man;
I envy not their tinsel pomp,
Their marble hall and lofty dome—
Dearer my native clouds and skies,
Dearer my humble Irish home.

There balmy sleep gave sweet repose,
And void the day of pressing care,
Youth's tide flowed in my ardent breast,
Bright Hope had made her dwelling there;
But now oppressed with care and years,
Sadly on distant shores I roam—
A hapless wanderer, far from thee,
My own dear, peaceful Irish home.

Beyond the gathered mist of years
A brown thatched cottage greets my sight;
Green ivy clasps its hallowed walls,
'Mid emerald hills it nestles bright;
About it blooms the golden furze,
Beside it whirls the brooklet's foam,
Loved faces meet my wistful gaze—
'Tis, 'tis my own sweet Irish home.

THE TWO LOVES

I SAW them at the altar kneel,
The bridegroom and the bride:
I heard the troth they plighted there
As one soul to abide.

He loves her dear and is beloved,
Together heart and hand
They tread the path of dreams come true
Along life's happy strand.

Yet now, O bridegroom, must you quench
The flame within your breast
That fondly for your mother burns
At Nature's own behest?

Nay, flowers twain upon one stem
Bloom sweetly side by side,
And in one soul two loves may throb—
For mother and for bride.

And so two loves, two ardent loves,
Together brightly glow
Within my loyal Irish heart
And both I proudly show:

* * * * *

For Mother Erin, she who wept
Her son that crossed the foam:
For fair Columbia, beauteous bride,
The Queen of freedom's home.

THE DAY-KING

RIGHT Sun on high, thou glorious orb of fire,
Flung out by God to end chaotic night
And be to man a friend would never tire—
Thou rounded Source of genial warmth and light,
O, would to heav'n that I could here indite
Words glowing as thine ardent golden beams,
Fit tribute to thy unsurpassing might!
Ah me! such words are only mine in dreams,
And even thus too poor to give what thee beseems.

Thou greatest, grandest, most transcendent thing
Of this material universe of ours,
Which, when God spake, to being swift did spring;
Imperial eye of Heaven, enjoying powers
To rule the day as King, and shed in showers
Thy bounteous rays on garden, field and tree
To dower the earth with corn and fruit and flowers
That man might live and thrive and happy be!—
'Tis meet, in sooth, our souls make grateful melody.

Withdraw thy face and all is thickest gloom;
Man's spirit sinks as sinks the seaman's lead,
For bird and beast the earth becomes a tomb,
While plant and flower bow their sorrowing head
A-seeking graves in their own garden bed;
The sky a funeral pall o'er Nature flung;
No moon to sway the seas, their tides lie dead;
Sweet Music's joyful chords remain unstrung—
A soulless world in sunless, moonless space were hung.

Small marvel that the Persians, noble race,
Nor they alone—the lofty-minded Gael,
Their nobler offshoot as historians trace—
Indued with soulful fancy, both did fail;
For by thy beauty smit, thee God they hail
O Sun! and worship give thee most supreme,
Till Eire's great apostle rends the veil—
He makes the Triune God his burning theme
And opes to one and all the grand Redemption's Scheme.

What tho' not God, but by His fiat made,
Still thou deservest well large meed of praise;
Nor would He grudge that such to thee be paid,
Nor wouldst thou wear a wreath undue of bays
As something snatched from His just glory's rays—
Oh, no! could'st speak, this were thy voiced desire:
"In praise to Him who bade me for thee blaze,
To th' empyrean realm, O man! aspire,
And bid the Angel Choirs strike high each golden lyre."

CYNTHIA

CYNTHIA! Fair Empress of the night!
How glorious 'tis to see thee sailing forth.
In splendor dight, from banks of ebon clouds
To draw aside the curtains of the dark
And flood with mellow light the vaulted sky—
And pour afar th' unstinted friendly beam
On pilgrim lone, benighted, hopeless lost.
New-heart'ning him along his toilsome way.

Upon thy nimbic throne with canopy
Of deep cerulean sitt'st thou serene,
Attended by thy myriad starry nymphs,
Unutterably bright in their allotted place
And marshaled by Orion, royal Prince
Of all the constellations of the skies.
At the Divine behest earth's rolling tides,
Obedient to thy undisputed sway,
At gentlest waving of thy sceptred staff
Or ebb, or flow.

In the deep hush of night
Benign thou broodest o'er the slumbering world
And scatt'rest gifts in showers of silver light.
And as earth's crystal waters—river, lake
Or bounding ocean—in their bosom catch
Thy glorious image, the enraptured waves
Show burnished silver in each lustrous fold.

When thou, sole Regent of the midnight hour,
Advancest stately o'er the azure fields
Exulting in the splendor of thy course,
The trembling stars, awe-struck at thy approach,
Their faces veil, eclipsed till thou hast passed;
While Philomela, tuneful bird of night,
With thy admiring praise the welkin fills.

Hast thou perchance forgot that, æons since,
Thy Maker called thee from abysmal naught

And, robing thee in regal robes of light
And placing in thy hand a shining wand,
Gave thee to rule the night till time's swift stream
Be blent for aye with life's eternal sea?
Ah! no, fair Cynthia! thy heart sends up
Without surcease sweet anthems to thy God.

Then teach thou me, and every man that views
Thy glory here, to lift aloft the soul
'Bove all things vain and sordid and terrene
To Him the great Creator of us all—
The shoreless sea of beauty and of truth,
And join with thee and all thy twinkling stars
And all creation vast, beyond our ken,
In adoration humble and profound
And soulful canticles of grateful praise.

THE GOAL SUBLIME

THE rivers and brooks flow onward free—
Such the divine behest;
Along they dash in endless glee,
Singing their song, "The sea, the sea"—
Nor will they dream of rest
Till, in the ocean's bosom bright,
They lose themselves in wild delight.

Nor verdant vales through which they flow,
Nor flowers along the way
That, rich with dewy brightness, grow
And mellow sweetness on them strow,
Their eager progress stay;
Nor 'vail to check their constant course
Toward ocean loved,—their end and source.

And shall not we speed onward too,
Nor heed the siren's voice
That fain from duty's path would woo,
And bid us pleasure false pursue?
Oh! be it e'er our choice;
Like the sainted wise who earth have trod,
To cease not till we rest in God.

SAINT CLARE

1

IKE the on-rushing tide comes the Saracen foe,
All crimson his pathway of havoc and woe;
For the rage of Mahomet is red in the gale
That sweeps to the hill o'er the wrack of the vale.
Assisi's brave manhood the foeman would rein—
As sand to the cyclone they strew the red plain.

The child and the mother, the snowy-haired sire,
Wait helpless and hopeless the infidel ire.
Why halts the wild Arab? Why curbs he his steed?
Why respite the Christians he destines to bleed?
On St. Damian's towers he fixes his gaze
As they flash back the gleam of the sun's dying rays;

For St. Damian's towers rise wondrously fair
O'er the cloister and shrines of the nuns of St. Clare.
"Behold!" cries the son of the desert, "Behold!
So guideth Mahomet with finger of gold!
There, golden the stores that our conquest awaits!
Ride ruthlessly on through yon glittering gates!"

Ah! what will become of you, doves of the Lord?
There's none to defend you with buckler and sword;
Ye are victims of hate, ye are doomed unto death,
But with Christ on your lips ye shall yield your last breath.
Advance, ye fierce warriors mighty and bold!
What fears the stout swordsman from lambs of the fold?

Lo! there be the treasures your cohorts shall reap,
While the sea of your slaughter flows fast and flows deep.
Ay, bury your arrows of hate to the head
In the bosoms of Christians, and pile up your dead!
Ay, war upon women for Mussulman glory
Till your caravans feast on your song and your story

2

But forth from her cell comes the Abbess St. Clare,
Deep trust in her heart, on her pale lips a prayer;

Her loved ones she leads to the shrine, where alone
Seems refuge to beckon, at foot of the Throne—
The Throne Eucharistic where reigneth the Lord
Christ Jesus their Succor, their Shield, and their Sword.

"Lord, save us—we perish!" cried those in the storm;
"Lord, save us!" cry these, "God of Mercy, from harm!
Death's sorrows encompass us round, like the sea,
Protect us, O God, for our hope is in Thee!"
Quick response from His Shrine falleth sweet on the ear,
"I will always protect you. Have nothing to fear."

But hark to the demon shouts rending the skies,
And hark to the oaths and the wild savage cries
That the bravest and stoutest of hearts might appall,
As they mount the great ladders and swarm up the wall
Crying each to his fellows, with curses anew,
"To the foremost the richest of booty is due!"

3

What vision commanding shines yonder up there
Looking down on the scene with a resolute air?
Encircling her brow is a halo of light,
Like a thin crescent moon on a clear summer night;
An avenging Archangel she seemeth to be,
Yet never a buckler or sword weareth she.

'Tis the Abbess St. Clare with her children around,
And the Monstrance she holds with devotion profound
Enclasping the Host that containeth the Lord
Who creates or annihilates worlds with a word.
Unfailing her trust in His plighted support
Which surroundeth her soul like impregnable fort.

The Monstrance she raises aloft in the air
'Mid deep adoration, and union of prayer.
She faces the Arabs. The Host all Divine—
A glance of the Lord—doth the sunlight outshine;
On the foe, as he climbs up St. Damian's walls,
That glance of Eternal Omnipotence falls!

Down, down go the Saracen pennants, and down

Go warrior brave and the King and his Crown.
Dazed, blinded and dumb they are flung from on high
As Satan was flung from the heights of the sky!
Few, few shall escape from the vale and the hill—
The chiefs and the mighty lie ghastly and still.

Away flee the hordes over hill, dale and fell
In a frenzy of terror, as hunted by hell;
And Convent and town, in the hour of their need,
By the Dove of the Host from the Moslem is freed;
While the multitudes saved, to St. Damian's fare
To chant the Te Deum with the nuns of St. Clare.

THE CORAL PEAK

HE beauteous coral islet
That, from the ocean bed
Into the pleasant sunshine,
Uplifts its glowing head
To sport with mirthful zephyrs
And greet the blue above,
Would seem as little sturdy
As the gentle turtle dove.

But let the stormy billows
Assail its gentle breast,
To foam it hurls them headlong
Till calm they sink to rest.

* * * *

Would'st be that coral islet,
That tower of rugged might,
Till breaks the eternal dawning
From Heaven's unclouded height?

If meek of heart, and humble,
Like the Savior, sweet and mild,
Though darkling tides of error
Or gales of passion wild
Assail thy steadfast bosom,
Thou'lt rear thy noble form
Amid the vexed ocean
Crowned victor of the storm.

ERIN AWAKING

HEN the foeman snatched from thee each
God-given right;
And entombed thee in darkness of slavery's night;
And on thy fair bosom pressed tyranny's heel,
While about thee lay shivered thy once trusty steel;

When he heaped outrage on thee, scorn, insult, and wrong,
Till thy form seemed lifeless, and mute was thy tongue—
Ah! he thought he had slain thee, that thrice bitter day,
And that hope had died with thee for ever and aye.

But no—though the Saxon well-speeded his dart,
Life's pulses lay dormant in the depths of thy heart;
And now, Mother Erin! life throbs through thy veins,
And dawns the bright morning of freedom from chains.

In the full blaze of freedom soon, soon wilt thou stand,
A queen bright and royal in thy own peerless land;
Let then but thy sunburst to the breeze be unfurled.
And thy sons shall throng round thee from the shores of the
world;

And of gifts bring the richest—a loyal heart's love—
And pledge thee a fealty before Heaven above;
Which gems howe'er priceless shall purchase no, never,
To serve and defend thee 'gainst thy foemen for ever.

And they'll catch in thy accents the song left unsung
While thy harp in cold darkness slept fettered, unstrung—
Thy warriors' proud glory, who gladly for thee
Fought till death on the red field that thou might'st be free.

Once again wilt thou teach them their sweet Celtic tongue,
That was heard throughout Eire, when nations were young,
And ope founts of wisdom to their wondering gaze
That lay locked in the Gaelic—a gem's hidden rays.

Grant this balm, God of Nations! to our sore-longing heart,
And let this be our cry ere from earth we depart;
"Till doomsday, loved Erin, be prosperous and free!
Esto perpetua!—a cushla machree!"

MAY

IS May, 'Tis May! thrice welcome May—
The loveliest month in all the year!
Come forth, ye flowers in bright array,
Sweet warblers, sing your blithesome cheer;
And thou, O Sun! beam golden rays
In this the month of Mary's praise.

Art gladdened sweetest Mother, say—
To see bedecked by loving hand,
With starry lights and flow'rets gay,
Thy shrines in every clime and land;
And when thou hear'st thine own dear name
Sent up from hearts with love aflame?

And those who now thy altars rear,
And in their hearts build fairer shrine—
When Death's dark shadow draweth near
Wilt thou defend with might divine?
Ah ! Mother, in that fateful hour
What child of thine fears Satan's power?

For come thou wilt from realms of light
Where now and aye thou reignest Queen
To glad thy child's fast-fading sight,
To whisper things unheard, unseen;
That happy soul, freed from alarms
Then flies into thy welcoming arms.

O for the heaven that now is thine!
O Mary's child! O child of grace!—
To look upon that face divine,
To feel that Mother's fond embrace,
To hear in her enchanting voice:
"Saved, saved, my child!—rejoice! rejoice."

SAINT BRIGID

LOVE'S spirit, jubilant at Daria's birth,
With grief profound her sorrow contemplates,
When roll in vain her eyes to find the day,
And drearily she gropes the path of life.
'Twas an eclipse unvariant that barred
The gates of vision 'gainst the sieging stars;
Yet beauteous as a lily Daria grew,
Sweet cherished in the gentle, fostering care
Of the meek Thaumaturga of the West—
The Virgin Saint of Erin's hallowed Isle.
And Daria loved her more than tongue can tell,
And ceaseless yearned to view St. Brigid's face,
But yearned from hopeless depths of rayless gloom.

"Pray, tell me, Mother Brigid, what is light?
And what are moon and planets, sun and sky?
Things strange, oft heard about, and all unseen.
Would I could even touch them with my hand
E'en as I clasp these nectar-breathing flowers!

"Oh, Mother, prithee, paint for me in words
Our mountains, streamlets, meads, and flowery dells—
The golden furze that crowns our Irish hills,
The daisies that bedeck the fields of green,
The cataracts bounding in wild ecstasy,
The glorious sea, whose chimes enchant mine ear!
What! Shall mine eyes from such a wondrous fount
The splendours of Creation never quaff?
The shamrock, whose mute sermon echoes still,
Plucked by thy love and worn upon my breast—
My vision shall that symbol never bless?
And am I fated ne'er to gaze upon
The Priest of God, in sacred vestments robed,
As daily at the Altar of the Lord
He offers to the Father His own Son
A sacrificial victim for the world?

"Woe, woe is me! and yet—Thy will be done!
Oh Father! let me ever sing Thy praise!

Didst Thou not hang the mist upon mine eyes?
And, Thou, O God!—Thou knowest what is best! "

The pathos of the plaint
On Brigid's spirit smote,
And Sympathy with magic stroke
Played on her heart-strings, till awoke
Deep Pity's soulful note.

With Beauty's majesty
And every grace, she shone.
Her spirit breathed of naught but heaven
From earliest dawn to latest even—
Her heart for God alone.

Celestial in her mien
Her soul was Christ's abode;
Less human than divine she seemed,
A seraph might she well be deemed,
For heaven around her glowed.

On swift ecstatic wing,
Aflame with love divine,
To the Throne of Grace her spirit springs
A suppliant to the King of Kings:
" Oh! hear me, Spouse of mine!

" Break Thou the seals, my Lord,
That bind thy Daria's sight!
Thy mercy on Thy handmaid shower,
I pray Thee, Lord, send down Thy power,
Her darkness flood with light! "

She touched those sightless eyes,
The black mists flee away.
" Mother, I see! " the maiden cries;
" O God! All-Merciful, All-Wise,
" Thou blessest me with day!"

ODE ON THANKSGIVING DAY

I

THE swift revolving seasons bring again,
To our delight of soul, Thanksgiving Day.
The Father of our Land did well ordain
That Autumn-tide should see us tribute pay
Of grateful praise, attended with display,
To Him who all the Nations doth command,
For countless blessings strewn along our way;
Beneath the shade of whose Paternal Hand
Our Nation rests secure, in truth and justice planned.

II

We thank Thee, Lord! for life and home and friends,
For flock and garnered growth of field and tree,
For bird and rill whose lilting sweetly blends
With solemn chanting of the glorious sea;
For myriad tinted blooms in bower and lea,
For stars and sun that generous downpour
Their beams. Nay, more—for gifts endowered free
Of mind and heart we thank Thee o'er and o'er,
And for the priceless gifts Thy Goodness has in store.

III

Nor mid Thanksgiving joys, and while we sit
Around the board, and fondly re-entwine
The friendships of the years, shall we omit
To aid our brothers who so sadly pine
In need, but gladly we shall make to shine
Within their darkened lives the gladsome beam
Of this Thanksgiving Day. Nor must a sign
Or jarring note arise where peace supreme
Doth reign throughout our Land, like to a faerie dream.

IV

Then lift on high throughout the Nation vast
Our hearts and voices till they joyous blend
In one united hymn, with trumpet blast—
Ringing a clarion tone from end to end—
An anthem raise the very skies to rend,
Extolling the Almighty's Sceptred Sway.
And may we all the pathway so ascend
Of Heaven's laws, as to deserve for aye
To share the endless bliss of Heaven's Thanksgiving Day.

THE TWIN SAINTS AND THE STORM

HAT sayest thou, Sister!—Stay all night
Till the morrow's dawn appear,
In heavenly converse to delight
While angels hover near!—
Stay here beyond the Convent gate,
And holy statute violate
Which hies us home again,
Thee to thy Convent, me to mine!—
Thy strange request I must decline,
Though keen the parting pain."

'Twas Saintly Benedict that spake
Thus to his Sister dear,
Whom he was wont for friendship's sake
To visit once a year.
The dove that knows nor guile nor harm,
The lily that each spotless charm
Unfolds to modest view,
Scholastica the Saint excels;
Within her stainless heart there dwells
Virtue rare and true.

In dell with every feature bright
To woo the scented gale,
Where Mount Cassino's lofty height
Looks down on Liri's vale,
Nigh where two streams had poured their tide,
A-dancing down the mountain side
To mingle at the spot—
There whiled the Saints the hours away,
Till glowed the peaks with dying day,
In sweetly sheltered cot.

And when man's folly they bewail,
Or speak of Jesus' love,
Their voice lends sweetness to the vale,
And joy to heaven above.

But oh! the rapture of their soul
Aflame to reach their heavenly goal!—
The day—why did it fade?
In vain the Sister would prolong
The soul's ecstatic heavenly song—
The Brother stern forbade.

The sun had set in molten gold,
The evening star shone bright,
Through azure depths the chaste moon rolled,
In silver splendor dight.
But lo!—she bows her head in prayer—
Dark heavy clouds surcharge the air,
The thunder peals on high,
Mid cosmic din the rain pours down—
The will of Heaven is clearly shown,
Return they dare not try.

Yea, was it that her soul's desire—
The spirit's lightning-flash—
Enkindled heaven's lightning fire,
And waked the thunder's crash?
And even as the falling shower,
Absorbed by Phœbus' ardent power,
Will rise to fall again;
So rose her ardent tearful prayer
To mass the clouds in midway air
Till down they fell in rain.

"Now, Brother, if thou canst, depart!"
Scholastica exclaimed;
"My last request thou fain wouldst thwart
But ere it could be framed,
And words' slow, lifeless, wingless form
Wafted to Him who rules the storm,
He heard the heart's desire;
So wills it Heaven that here we stay
To hymn God's praise till dawn of day,
And fan Love's sacred fire."

Three days had sped—and from his cell,
Built on Cassino's crest,
Where holy Benedict loved to dwell—

There sees he toward the West
His Sister as a snow-white dove
Ascending to the realms of love—
Alone must he remain?—
In hymns of praise his soul he pours
And longs for the eternal shores
Where joys supernal reign.

* * * * *

Not many moons waxed full and waned
Till granted is his prayer;
His soul mounts heavenward unrestrained,
His Sister's joy to share;
And while together in one tomb
They calmly rest till welcomed home,
The resurrection day;
Their souls in loving fond embrace
Enjoy their Jesus, face to face,
In endless bliss for aye.

THE SUMMONS

ITH Thee, my hope and stay,
How glad, sweet Lord, I climb the mount of years;
Though all the dreary way
Be wilderness of thorn and flood of tears!

My trustful hand in Thine
And Thy Viaticum within my breast,
What fear, O Lord, were mine
To enter Death's grim gates at Thy behest?

For what could happen me
Forth-faring with Thy power, my shield?
So, hand in hand with Thee,
I trust to reach the empyrean field,
Then call me, when Thou wilt, my latest breath to yield.

WHAT WILL THE HARVEST BE?

AS Autumn leaves of varied hue
Are swept along by Autumn streams
Till lost in ocean's caverned blue
Where ray of sunshine never beams;

So human action, thought and theme—
Howbeit fleeting they may be—
Are borne by time's swift-rushing stream
Into eternity's dark sea.

For good, for ill—there shall they stay
Emblazoned with their author's name
To merit, the great harvest day,
A glorious crown or whelming shame.

Crime's agent—O, the sorry plight!—
Must face what harvest? Fetid weeds;
As black as Winter's inky night,
His life's begrimed and guilty deeds.

But bright the garnering—golden grain—
As golden as an Autumn morn
The deeds that weave a jeweled chain,
Fair Virtue's client to adorn.

That day the Judge will laud the right
'Fore all arisen from the tomb;
And bid them reign, in glory dight,
With Him in the eternal home.

But crime unwept, like searching fire,
Will wake remorse that knows no rest;
And loose the vultures of God's ire
To prey upon the wicked breast.

Great God of Might! our bosoms fill
With grace puissant here below
To do the right, to shun the ill,
And win escape from endless woe!

Nay more—to blot out Passion's stain
With Love's repentant tear and moan,
That none but Virtue's deeds remain
To stud with gems our heavenly throne!

THE BANKS OF THE NORE

HEN fancy envisions the sweet scenes of yore
Enraptured I gaze on the calm-flowing Nore,
As it softly meanders thru Ormond's rich plain
Where shamrocks befringe the gold meadows of grain.

With the pulse of a bard beating high in my breast,
Have I strayed on these banks with old memories blest,
Where none might disturb the deep flow of my thought
And the soul-tide of visions with ecstasy fraught;

Till, trembling, my hand grasped old Innisfail's lyre
And swept the wild chords as my soul mounted higher;
While the waves seemed to listen, as slower they sped,
To my harp-notes of praise for the patriot dead.

For so deep have our rivers quaffed patriot-blood
That the patriot-soul seems to breathe in the flood—
So I sang to the waves, as they glanced to the shore,
The deeds and the fame of our heroes of yore—

Swept the chords while my harp and my heart were afire
Till Night chilled to silence the voice and the lyre,
For lost Freedom I sighed till my heart was full sore
As homeward I strode by the banks of the Nore.

Ah! my spirit still longs, in a clime far away,
To behold Mother Erin in Liberty's day
With the glory of Freedom illuming once more
My own native isle and the banks of the Nore.

ST. DOMINIC AND THE ANGELS

NO food in the house, in the cellar no wine,
Yet where is the spirit is heard to repine?
Will not Father Dominic provide ample fare
For the sons of his loving and tenderest care?

His heart melts within him, his soul is on fire . . .
In famine's fierce grip must he see them expire?
"So woeful a fate, Heaven's mercy avert!
Thy children, O God! Thou wilt never desert!"

With this prayer in his heart and strong hope in his soul
Father Dominic cries, "Let the dinner bell toll!"
And like soldiers obeying the call of the drum
His famishing sons from their labors have come.

Cold, hungered, expectant, they stand in their place
And join with their leader in chanting the grace;
Then meekly they sit at the chill empty board
And look to St. Dominic who looks to the Lord.

Anon reads the lector in voice calm and clear . . .
When lo! of a sudden two angels appear
And set before each one his portion of bread,
Bow low and then vanish ere ought can be said.

Didst note that the angels on entering the door
Served the lowliest first from their heavenly store?
To show that Kind Heaven doth ever impart
First place to the humble and lowly of heart.

"Bring the wine!" spake the Saint, and the cask that before
Lay empty, neglected, below on the floor,
O'erbrimming is found with the purest of wine.
"My sons," quoth the Saint, "By God's grace let us dine!"

How grateful they felt on that thrice-blessed day
To the Lord and St. Dominic none may portray,
And how joyful the heart of the Father who dared
To hope against hope that his sons should be spared.

Whoe'er in distress looks to heaven above
And childlike appeals to the Infinite Love,
Will like Dominic find that the Lord cannot fail,
For the cry of the trustful must ever prevail.

ODE TO CONSCIENCE

I

THOU "still small voice"! Thou oracle divine!
God's beacon, set in cloud and storm to shine!
Thou sentinel that keepest thy patrol
Unceasing, at the portals of the soul
Lest unaware the foe an entrance gain,
And lead with him of ills an endless train!
And where find friend that more will thee impel
In deeds of truth and justice to excel?
Yet—passing strange!—how many a heartless man
To slaughter thee contriveth every plan.
And when he fondly deems thee laid away
And thinks—poor fool!—thy epitaph to write,
Thou on a sudden risest from the clay
To visit him anew at dead of night
With deep upbraiding, stressed with lowering frown—
Like unto Banquo's ghost thou wilt not down!

II

Drown Conscience, if you will, beneath the din
Of dissipation—and its voice within
Will overtop the storm of revelry;
Or bury it in darkest ocean caves
And chant its requiem in ecstasy—
'Twill float triumphant on the swelling waves.
Or quench it in the Bacchanalian bowl
Where loss of sense of duty claims the soul—
The morrow's dawn will witness its return
With added scorpion-stings that sear and burn.
O self-recorder, most infallible,
Of all man's thoughts and deeds of good and ill!
Thou searchest Sion keen with many a lamp,
And on each act its merit thou dost stamp.
With vision clear the guilty thou dost scan,
And fearless front him with, "Thou art the man!"—
A Nemesis, thou constant dost pursue
Till tears of penance wash the stains' dark hue.

III

What gall into life's cup thou pourest deep!

With thunder-peals thou wakest guilty sleep,
Forewarning of the avalanche of doom
When Death, given Death sets wide the expectant tomb.
Vesuvius' burning breast of horrors dire
Were zephyrs mild beside God's wrathful ire.
The wounded eagle flies in fierce unrest
From cliff to cliff, but carries in his breast
The dart. Thus too the spirit stained with crime
May fly o'er land and sea from clime to clime,
But from the shaft the breast he cannot free
For such is the Eternal's just decree.
Not even Death, that all things else unties,
Can loose the burden howsoe'er he tries.
Linked with the human soul and wedded fast—
Thou goest before the Judgment Seat at last
To witness give of all the life-time past,
That so the soul in justice may be classed
With God's elect, or with the lost be cast.

IV

But oh! the feast of soul which those enjoy
Whose Conscience, pure and bright, shows no alloy.
A guiltless Conscience is a tree to bear
Ambrosial fruitage beyond all compare;
A vine whose purple vintage might afford
A nectar worthy the celestial board.
What power is thine to soothe the martyr's woes,
And to sustain him through death's final throes!
The howlings of the cruel mob insane
Thou canst e'en turn into a seraph's strain;
Canst paint the palm and crown before his eye
Awaiting his triumphal march on high.

Be wise betimes and list with utmost care
To Conscience's voice, the fadeless crown to wear.

THROUGH MARY TO JESUS

HEN the wanderer's sun disappears—
The sun of his hopes—in the West;
And the dark mist of doubts and of fears
Rise gloomy and chill in his breast—

If then, from despair's deep abyss
He cries unto Mary for aid,
She offers a Mother's caress
And bids him approach unafraid.

The foe dreads her slightest command—
Bright vistas before him now ope,
As she leads him, how gracious, by hand
O'er the path of repentance and hope.

To the feet of the Saviour she leads—
To Jesus her own Divine Son—
For pardon, victorious she pleads
And for light future pitfalls to shun.

TRIED AS BY FIRE

IS drop by drop we sip life's cup of pain
But boundless as the ocean is the gain.
The sculptor's oft-repeated strokes endow
The lifeless marble block with throbbing brow;
E'en thus the parent chasteneth his heir
To make him worthy his estate to share.
The seedling lowly, clinging to the dust,
The wintry frost endures and angry gust;
Spring comes and breathes upon its darksome tomb,
And into life it bursts—a gorgeous bloom.
The gardener's careful wound forms plant or flower
That's destined to adorn the Master's bower;
While noxious weed and wildly tangled brier
He binds together for consuming fire.
Rejoice true children of a thorn-crowned God,
And meekly bow ye to the chastening rod!
This present chalice brimming o'er with tears
Will flood with rapture Heaven's eternal years.

ODE TO GRATITUDE

WEET Gratitude! Of justice daughter mild!
Upon thy natal day kind Heaven smiled.
In the immortal thought of Cicero
Thou art a virtue—dost divinely glow;
A fruitful mother of many a virtue rare
That loves to nestle in the bosom fair
Of noble souls, whose aspirations high
Far upward soar beyond the sphering sky.

Thou art the spring of Angels' melody
And vast creation's wondrous symphony,
Like incense circling up perennially
Before the Throne of Him upon the mount—
Of all that is, the Origin and Fount.

What music half so sweet to Him above
As that which memory strikes from chords of love,
Aflame with thoughts of blessings poured from Heaven
Without surcease and without measure given!
And hence the Prophet-Bard, with love afire,
Ne'er ceased to sing God's praises on his lyre—
Witness the psalter of this heavenly sage
Abloom with grateful flowers on every page.

From out a vase of oil of roses sweet,
Pray, what but fragrance can the senses greet?
Nor is there place in bosoms nobly good
For the foul monster of ingratitude.

FLOWERS—AN ODE

LILIES and marigolds, rosebuds and flowerets,
All formed in beauty of sunshine and dew;
"Stars of the earth" and sweet nurslings of Paradise,
In whose faces, as crystals, their Maker we view.

Nurtured and fed on the soft airs of heaven,
Evangels are ye of your Author on high;
Each petal a sermon, each calyx a heart-song—
How ye lift up our souls to our home in the sky!

Well-springs of thoughts and emotions, transcending
The power of poet in words to declare;
The rapture of joy and the deep tide of sorrow
'Tis only the language of flowers lays bare.

What a mystic enchantment your spirit weaves round us,
As though Fairyland claimed ye in justice and right,
And its Queen had commanded the magic of artists
To pencil those rainbow tints varied as light.

Think what it meant to the heart of the captive,
As fettered and lone in the prison he lay,
When up through the pavement—oh! God what a blessing!—
A sweet tiny blossom was making its way.

Could a visiting Angel, I ask, be more welcome?—
The prison's a palace, the nightmare is o'er;
It whispers of hope to his desolate bosom,
It heralds the dawn-light from liberty's shore.

L'envoi:

Oh! how cold, dark and drear were this planet of ours,
Had its Maker not blessed us with the sunshine of flowers.

A TWILIGHT REVERIE

I

THE Weary Sun was hasting to his rest
Where sky meets ocean in the burning West;
His parting beams that lent their magic hues
Might well inspire the dullest poet's Muse.
The sheltered herds their dreamy nocturne lowed;
The distant tide entoned its solemn ode.
From vine-clad bowers, hung with purple fruit,
In tones enrapturing as a Grecian lute
The linnet fluted soft his vesper hymn.
Silvered the rising moon the mountain's rim;
Autumnal fragrance filled the balmy air—
The spirit of enchantment hovered there.
Dew-thirsty flowers to eve their welcome glowed,
And twixt its banks a dallying brooklet flowed;
As lazily the streamlet crept along,
Its ripples lulled the air like Naiad song.
Tired Nature, pausing from her toil the while,
Surveyed the scene and gave approving smile.

II

Then forth I sauntered toward the maple grove
Where, in the gloaming, I was wont to rove.
Strange music seems the deepening shade to fill;
My listening heart the tender measures thrill.
Through sylvan aisles I peered—and on a mound,
Seated beside the rivulet, I found
A white haired MINSTREL, bowed with care and years,
Striking his harp and mingling song with tears.

III

Fast by him towered a gray, gaunt, castled rock
That bore the brunt of many a tempest-shock;
While o'er him, widespread, rising from the glade,
A bending willow proffered friendly shade.
The gentle breeze caressed his withered cheek
As fain its kindly sympathy to speak.
Upon the bank before him lay a BOOK
On which he fixed a tender loving look,

And while his fingers swept the chords along
His very soul was pulsing in his song.
The woodland round about melodious rings,
While all the feathered choir, with folded wings,
Give ear with me unto the lay he sings.

IV

"O simple verselets! Little Book
On which my heart is wont to look
As gift from the Eternal King—
Of poesy the living Spring!
O cherished booklet, thou to me
Art near and dear as child could be.
From Zeus's brow that Pallas sprung
Was fable by the poets sung;
But thou wast fashioned in this brain,
Out-pouring as a summer rain
That gladdens with its crystal showers
The golden hearts of drooping flowers.

V

"Beloved of mine, my mental child,
My own soul's offspring undefiled
What wingless hours you sweetly spent
For me—what holy solace lent;
What joy, with never murk nor mar,
In moulding you to what you are.
Now blends life's purpling twilight ray
With dawn of the eternal day,
And I in sooth shall see no more
Or book or tree, or tide or shore.
And who will mourn the Minstrel fled,
Asleeping in his clay-cold bed!
Too soon the mourner turns aside,
For sorrow's tears are quickly dried.
Remembrance fades as fades the bloom
Of roses laid upon the tomb.

VI

"When hand and pen to rest are laid
And mouldering in the cypress shade,
Will you, like me, be cast aside

And in oblivion's tomb abide?
Or will you, utterly as lost,
From careless hand to hand be tossed
Till haply rescued in the end,
And snatched from out the obscure of night,
By some warm sympathetic friend,
To bask in noonday's blessed light?

VII

"The Power Divine which could provide
The famished with refreshing tide
From flinty rock, or time-bleached bone
That lay at Ramathlehi lone;
That self-same Power can cause this Book
To be as rill in shady nook
To some lone pilgrim wandering, lost,
From scorching sands that he hath crost.
Yea, freshening draught to parching tongue;
And melody of David flung
From liquid harps to soothing strung
For breasts with keenest anguish wrung;
While to his soul, caught in the snare
Of doubt in the Paternal care
And all the gloom of fell despair;
Be sparkling, dancing, warming ray,
Enkindling hope—where reigned dismay—
To climb the upward starry way."

But here his song grew fainter, yet more sweet,
Sweet as the swan's whose sweetest is his last,
The magic spell my soul enthralled complete—
But ah! the Minstrel's strength was waning fast.
With sudden ecstacy he ardent pressed
His treasured VOLUME to his failing breast.

VIII

"Fond child," he sung, "my joy! my pride!
Your wanderings may the Angels guide
Where praise shall evermore redound—
As witness of my thanks profound—
To God, of gifts the Fount and Goal,
Till tides and seasons cease to roll.

And thou my HARP!—Companion dear!
Fond partner of my joys and woes!
Who then shall shield from jest and jeer,
And guard thee, love thee and revere,
And give thee peace and sweet repose?"

Deep silence instant seized upon his lyre,
Hushed were the strains and quenched the poet's fire;
Upon his well-loved harp he bowed his head—
What!—was the weary Minstrel's Spirit fled?
Quick bounding toward him, fondly I exclaimed
"O Christian Bard, howbeit unacclaimed!
Be mine the gracious task your dying will
With loving care to tenderly fulfill.
Thy Harp beloved that longs no more to roam—
Ah! how 'twill miss the Master's lyric fingers!—
Shall find an honored place within my home
While ever by its hearth dear memory lingers.
Thy Script of song shall see the light of day
To hearten pilgrims on the upward way."—

But what amazement mine—when from his breast
His cherished Book of lays I fain would wrest;
Nor Book, nor Harp, nor Bard my hand could find;
Mine eyes I oped, awoke the slumbering mind—
The moonbeams in my room were dancing free
And silvering all in fairy filigree

DIVINE FORBEARANCE

"Then did they spit in his face."—St. Matt. 26;67

HAT! outrage Thee, great Son of God!
The red bolt in its lair
Awaiting but Thy silent nod
Nor man nor fiend to spare!
Has not Thy glance laid low in death
Proud hosts, as leaves in winter's breath?
Have not the sturdy mountains quaked
Whene'er thine ire Divine awaked?

Nay, nay! Such outrage rested not
Upon that glorious brow,
Away the thrice unseemly thought!
To this Thou couldst not bow—
And yet in sooth Thou didst, dear Lord,
Nor spake the all-destroying word.
And this to free and cleanse us all
From sinful stain and Satan's thrall.

CROSS AND CROWN

NO, not from Thabor's radiant mount
Did Christ ascend to glory,
But from the sorrowing Olivet
That saw the tragic story.
Thus, not the pleasant spots of earth
That crowned the Saints with flowers,
But places to which memory clings
Of pain through patient hours
Are dearest to their heart of hearts;
In joy they gaze upon them
From Heaven's shining battlements—
What bliss affliction won them!
Yea, verily our Cross today
Of keenly bitter sorrow
Will be, if borne for Jesus' sake,
Our Crown of joy tomorrow.

THE FIRST-BORN PRIMROSE OF SPRING

HE first-born primrose of Spring
Once greeted my vision at eve
As I sauntered alone in the neighboring wood,
The burden of care to relieve.

Thought I, will some maiden, sweet bloom!
Take you homeward her cottage to bless
As your charms one by one you will gladly unfold
Till you shine out in full loveliness?

Or shall you, unheeded, unloved,
Shed your sweetness in vain for a day
And waste all your fragrance on each wanton gale—
Then languish and wither away?

* * * *

That evening saw ushered to life
A first-born, God-given boy;
In the fond parents' bosoms—What marvel 'tis so!—
There is bounding the full tide of joy.

Its dimpled face beams with a smile,
Its eyes are of heavenly blue;
A fresh breath of heaven come down from the skies,
A cherub delightful to view.

But this child—what, I ask, will he be?
A blessing in truth and in deed;
Or a menace and woe to his country and home?
Will he grow to a flower or a weed?

* * * *

Oh, know ye not, Mothers of men!
That the child is as wax in your hands?
Look then, I pray, that ye mould him with care
As the Mighty Creator demands.

Guide his tender and faltering steps
On the pathway whose bright borders show
Faith's passion-flower, and Prayer's marigold,
And the lily as chaste as the snow;

And the fair modest violet, I trow,
That symbols the humble of heart;
And Charity's rose that so ardently burns,
The fullness of life to impart.

But the light that illumines that path
Is the sacred and ne'er-failing light
Of the Cross, blending sweet with the rays of the Crown
That stream downward from Eden's blest height.

WASHINGTON

REAT Warrior-Statesman! noble Washington!
Champion bold of human liberty,
Columbia's child and Nature's hero-son!
Cast in giant mould, thy infancy
By Nature's mountain-peaks' sublimity
Was smiled upon. Her forests with a zest
Encirclingly caressed thy nursery.
Two oceans joined in chant to lull to rest
Whom Byron called "the Cincinnatus of the West."

II

Elect of Heaven—as Moses was of yore—
And bounteously endowed with gifts to suit
Thy destined task—to hurl from out thy shore
The despot's armed host, and to uproot
Foul slavery's upas tree, whose bitter fruit
Had been the nation's bread for many a day.
Rejoice! for Freedom's fruits shall now salute
The gladdened eye, and bless the land for aye.
Oh! first in all our hearts! how can we thee repay?

III

Columbia fair! Well may thy bosom swell
With grateful pride, for thy sagacious child
In peace as war supremely did excel—
A new Camillus is he justly styled.
To heal dissension's wounds he skilful toiled;
And, in the fire of genius, welded fast
The jealous Colonies—full reconciled—
Into the Union prosperous and vast,
Presenting glorious front to Fortune's every blast.

IV

The grateful Nation urged a Kingly goal—
As oft did he refuse. Such tempting dream
Could ne'er find lodgment in his selfless soul.
He wisely deemed it to be more supreme
To reign unrivalled in their fond esteem.
What need had HE of crown begemmed with stone?
Let those who will ambition tinsel-gleam—
A gilded thing oft made of guilt and groan—
But Nature's regal self did WASHINGTON enthrone.

ERIN FREE

THERE rushes on my spirit, like the tide upon the strand,
A vision of the future of my cherished native land;
And in that glance prophetic I behold a form divine
In splendor robed—in glories that the very stars outshine—
It is Erin, Mother Erin—she is seated on a throne
And golden-crowned and sceptred, and the Green Isle all her own;
A warrior host encircles her—a great and mighty throng—
Enchanted and enraptured then my soul burst forth in song:

Say, can it be that Freedom's dawn
Is climbing Erin's sky?
And can it be mine eyes are blest
With the vision ere I die?
For seven weary centuries
Till hopeless seemed our doom,
"The Niobe of Nations," we
Have mourned in thralldom's gloom.

In sooth we struggled through a sea,
The crimson sea of pain,
But Heaven was on our side the while,
We have our own again;
Our own it is forevermore,
The Ireland of our love,
Dear to our heart's responsive chords
All other lands above.

Ye Irish hills that long have wept
Our cruel wrongs and woes
Uplift your brows!—look!—see our sky
Red-blushing like the rose;
'Tis the roseate tint of liberty,
'Tis Freedom's happy dawn,
Then skip and dance right merrily
Like to the blithesome fawn.

Ye noble rivers of our land,

Go singing to the sea
And tell the vast rejoicing deep
Your country now is free.
Joy bells ring out! Ye bonfires blaze,
Light up the deepest skies,
Proclaim to Nations yet to come
That Freedom never dies!

And thou, our native Harp, awake!
The long dark night is past,
The dawning smile of liberty
Illumines thee at last;
Evoke from every chord of thine
The soul of Freedom's strain
Till the listening Nations of the earth
Take up the glad refrain.

Our glorious Flag!—wipe out its stains,
A cycle's blood and tears,
And let it stream in freedom's blaze
Through all the coming years.
Our Gaelic tongue "oft doomed to death"
By cruel law and hate,
The tongue of chieftain, bard, and sage,
We proudly reinstate.

With band and Sunburst onward march
O'er mountain, plain and vale
Throughout the land from shore to shore,
Ye Sons of Innisfail—
Aye, East and West and North and South
With heartiness sincere—
And make the blue vault vocal with
Your choral song and cheer.

And Erin's Exiles roaming far
As the world's remotest bound,
Unnumbered as the glittering stars
The midnight dome around—
Join, scattered children of the Gael
In every clime and land,
Join in the jubilation wide
And swell the anthem grand!

Clasp hands in lasting friendship's bonds
As the paean you prolong
Till earth itself is jubilant
With the triumph of your song!
As rush the ocean waves to kiss
In homage Erin's feet,
Thus trooping come in myriad hosts
With fealty fond to greet.

Your royal Mother Rosaleen,
Who remembers you the while
And longs to welcome your return
With a mother's fondest smile.
Ah! sad of heart you kissed her hand
In tenderest farewell
As prone she lay in galling gyves—
Her anguish who could tell!

Return and feast your longing eyes
On her queenly form and face—
Erect, exultant, stands she now
With all a Monarch's grace
On freedom's soil, while freedom's sun
In joy is streaming down
His gladdest beams upon her brow
To light her peerless Crown

ADDRESS TO THE FLAG

FLAG of my adopted land!
How sweet to me each shining fold!
Dearer thy stars than all the gold
That lies 'neath every ocean strand.

O beauteous flag of heaven's own blue,
With stripe adorned, begemmed with star—
So feared by foemen, near and far,
But worshiped by thy children true.

What bosom swells not proud and high
That's sheltered by thy sacred power?
What citizen in war's dread hour
But for thy sake would gladly die?

God bless thee! Standard of the right!
Strong shield of the oppresséd brave!
From tyrants, all weak nations save;
Restore them long-lost Freedom's light.

Maintaining peace throughout the world,
From evil guarding every home—
Unstained as wild Niagara's foam
O'er land and sea e'er shine unfurled.

THE LESSON ROYAL

THE noble lords and ladies fair,
Ranged in the rosy bower,
To Music's strains enchanting list
In the gay festal hour;
And in their midst the smiling king
Whose bounty sings his reign,
And at his side the beauteous queen
Who rules the hearts of Spain.

But soon they stare with dumb surprise
When to the plenteous board
A stranger comes, unkempt and rude,
And sits, nor speaks a word.
A dust-stained mendicant, he bore
A dour and haughty air;
Nor curtsied he to king or queen
Or prince or courtier there.

Unmannerly he sate him down
The royal guests among,
And ate and drank till back he sank—
Then sudden up he sprung.
Full brazenly he brushed him past
Imperial hosts and all,
And swaggered from the banquet-bower
Ignoring great and small.

A score of falchions had avenged
The insult and the shame,
But King Alfonso waved them back
And quenched the mounting flame.
"We marvel not," the monarch said,
"Your righteous anger soared
When we, for favors freely given,
Saw gratitude ignored.

"But rest your swords and stay your wrath,
And answer me: 'Are they
Who thank not God for all His gifts

Less worthy blame, I pray?'
The thankless wight who rudely turned
From us whose gifts he shared,
But mirrors our own thanklessness
That Mercy's hand hath spared.

"I planned the scene you witnessed here
To make the lesson plain—
Neglect to thank the God of Gifts
Bemeans the lords of Spain.
And let us vow that while these walls
Still echo to our tread,
Each time we gather round this board
Shall grace to God be said!"

WHO CAN TELL?

REAT Nature with what wonders fraught!
Thy secrets we with subtlest thought,
In vain essay;
We see thy face, we know in part,
But may not pierce thy inner heart
With reason's ray.

We watch with constant efforts new,
The stars afloat in liquid blue;
But how unfold
Of what these shining orbs are made,
Whence luminous, or when to fade,
Or how controlled?

The regal sun that never tires—
What fount supplies his deathless fires
And golden light?
And whence the silver of the sphere,
That wanders calm her pathway clear,
To rule the night?

How gauge her finest influence wide
On mortal man and swelling tide
And verdant dale?
Or tell how clouds from middle air,
Enormous though the weight they bear,
In gauzy veil,

In crystal drop or feathery flake
Fall soft on wold and mountain lake
And streamlet free;
Or riding on the northern gale,
Come charging down in deadly hail
On flower and tree?

What laws confine the rolling seas,
'Mid tempest wild or softest breeze,
To ebb and flow?
To boom in wrath 'gainst jutting rock

Or lave the strand with gentler shock
And murmur low?

The struggling wind, who chains them fast,
Or swings them loose in sweeping blast;
Then bids them back
To darksome cave, like conquered steeds,
While zephyrs play among the reeds
That 'scaped their wrack?

Who bids the avalanche, at rest,
Speed merciless from mountain-crest
On vale below?
Or Aetna burst his rocky band
And, fiercely burning, o'er the land
Destructive flow?

Ah! none save Him, who great and small
From naught to being called them all,
All comprehends;
'Tis He, the one Eternal Cause,
Who guideth each with wisest laws
To wisest ends.

CRIMSON ROSES

EEK ye the brightest flowers
Humanity can boast?
They deck ensanguined bowers,
They form the Martyr-host.

For Jesus' sacred name
They flung their lives away,
Disdaining wealth and fame
As veriest dross and clay.

Not theirs to sell their Lord
For all a monarch's smiles;
'Twas theirs to court the sword
That slays but not defiles.

They gained the palm and crown
Upon the crimsoned sod;
They scorned the despot's frown
And won the smile of God.

THE HEROINE OF CAESAREA

I

CAESAREA! Regal city
Of a bygone day,
Where kings and queens with gorgeous court
Were wont to hold high sway;
How proud you stood 'mid lawns and vines—
Fair Cappadocia's pride—
A jewel thou in emeralds set,
Refulgent far and wide.
Yet far outshining earthly gems
And every precious stone
Was Dorothy, your native child,
Tho' hidden and unknown.

II

But see yon speck foreboding ill
In the darkling western sky!
And see yon heartless, ruthless judge
Condemning her to die—
For being, forsooth! a Christian—
Or Christ her King deny.
Blandishments and promises
Sabricius vainly tries;
In vain he threatens tortures
Unless she sacrifice
To Roman pagan deities—
The law must be obeyed—
Then, spake out boldly to the judge,
This noble tender maid:
"Your time and breath, O judge, you waste!—
Oh! longed-for tortures to me haste!
My soul's spouse Jesus bids me come
To Paradise, His garden home,
Where fruit and flower perennial bloom;
Where the lily's white and the rose's red
Enamel the green of the meadow's bed;
Where the souls of the just, freed of earthly bond,
Live in bliss with Christ the stars beyond;
To Christ my Spouse who died for me,
To Him—Oh! to Him I long to flee!"

III

A certain lawyer in the crowd
With mocking sneer exclaimed aloud:
"Say, Dorothy, would you condescend
Some flowers and fruits to me to send
From your spouse's garden after you die?"
"Most willingly," was her quick reply.
The tortures are over, the conflict is done,
The tyrant is vanquished, the battle is won;
And Dorothy's spirit triumphant has flown
To grace, at Christ's bidding, a heavenly throne.
But scarce has she entered the portals of joy
Than she sends to Theophilus, the scoffer, a boy.
Snow-white are his garments and golden his hair;
With his eyes' azure depths no sky could compare;
And sweet were the accents that fell from his tongue,
Like the fond strains of yore that in dreams we hear sung:
"Oh, Theophilus, Dorothy sends you these flowers
And fruits most delicious, from her Spouse's bright bowers!"
Then leaving the gifts he vanished from sight,
Like a spark struck from steel in the dark of the night.
The roses and fruits were too fragrant and fair
For this sin-stained and thorn-doomed planet to bear.
Beside, 'twas mid-winter and the whole country round
In the icy-cold grasp of King Frost was fast-bound—
Nor flowers nor fruit anywhere could be found!
The gifts and the angel from heaven were sent
That the scoffing blasphemer might truly repent.

IV

Theophilus' soul to its center is moved,
His mind is illumined, the truth is approved;
Every chord of His being responds to the thrill—
To Sabricius, the tyrant, he cries out with a will:
"Yea, Dorothy's God is the true God, indeed!
A Christian, I am! With your tortures proceed!"
Then onward he rushed with the cataract's speed
To win, as the noble St. Dorothy won,
A palm and a diadem 'bove the bright sun—
Where in gardens elysian Christ's cherished ones tread,
And the sad tear of sorrow shall never be shed;
Where bliss never cloys, and where Death has no place,
And the just find a home in the Savior's embrace.

TO MEMORY

MEMORY! Thaumaturga of the soul
Whose wizardry surpasseth human ken!
From out the vanished years thy magic wand
Recalleth unto pulsing life again
Lost forms and features, voices stilled, and scenes
Consigned long since to dark Oblivion's tomb!
Thou "treasury and guardian of all things,"
Exhaustless mine more worth than Plutus' gold,
Thou priceless council-chamber of the mind!
Thou endless source of joys that conjures up
Fair images and long-forgotten thoughts
Conjoined with songful laughter passing sweet,
And happy saunterings thro' fairy haunts,
And Autumn fields aglow with golden grain,
And, in the distance dim, the moonlit waves
And silvery waterfalls that fain would woo
To soul-communings with Eternal Love.
Thus all our yesterdays and our todays
May friendly meet, and each bid each "Good morrow."

* * * * *

With what rare gifts and powers the soul is dowered
By the Great Primal Cause, our Bounteous Lord,
Conferring on mortality at once
A two-fold life—the present and the past!
Wherefore, dear Lord, our souls like living coals
Aye, burn with endless and adoring gratitude.

SMILES

HAT charm is in a smile!
'Tis balm in time of sorrow;
It sweetens care and toil,
And heartens for the morrow.

Tell a pleasant tale
With smiles besprinkled over—
Frowns away will sail,
And cares will run to cover.

The beamy smile is fire—
The live electric spark
That flies along the wire
And lightens up the dark.

Yea, Magic's in a smile—
'Tis balm in time of sorrow;
It sweetens care and toil,
And heartens for the morrow.

THE CHRISTIAN HERO

I

YON lowly shrub beside the mountain-way—
I sauntered by it many a summer's day
Nor heeded it, though passing fair it grew
Where ferns abound and flowers of varied hue;
For all alike seemed beautiful, and none
Outcharmed its mates beneath the summer sun.

King Winter comes and scatters o'er the land
His sparkling splendors with unsparing hand;
His ermine carpet overspreads the mount
Save where the shrub stands guard above the fount.
He finds it there amid the field of snow;
With magic brush he touches leaf and bough
With azure, crimson, emerald and gold—
What brilliant hues his cunning strokes unfold
Till stands it there in richer splendor clad
Than Solomon in all his glory had.

II

Thus oft of one who seems of common mould
No note we take. Within his breast the gold
Of character is locked from human view,
In balm of spring and summer charms he grew—
His face all smiles, his heart a merry chime
From morn to night.—'Tis yet his summer-time.

But Winter comes—and bitter is the hour.
Dim grows the sun, the sky begins to lower;
Now fierce assail the blasts of suffering rude,
The biting frosts of man's ingratitude;
From slander's leaden clouds each fiery dart
Speeds, deadly aimed at his devoted heart.

III

Before such stress, when meaner souls might cower,
Ne'er flinches he. With valiant Christian power
He bears the storm of wrong, and all the pain,
For love of the cross-bearing Nazarene.
Even as the wreath which bleeding sorrow wound,

And here on earth the Queen of Martyrs crowned;
So shafts of wrong disclosed his latent worth
And from the gold removed the dross of earth.

Forth comes he now ennobled from the storm;
Thus takes he on a new and glorious form,—
The form of Christ—'tis viewed in every line—
His countenance less human than divine.
Wise Providence it was that limned the face
And chose the storm to add sublimer grace;
Unknown before the test of trial came,
He hath achieved a Christian hero's fame.
Mighty he towers where humblest walks he trod—
Beloved of mortals and thrice blest of God.

SLANDER'S DART

WITLESS youth—the tale is told—
Shattered a priceless vase of gold
While striking at a gentle fly
That sported round it blamelessly.

Thus oft the spiteful envious wight,
Whose vengeful heart is black as night,
Would fain his neighbor's fame dethrone,
But soon or late destroys his own;
For boomerang-like vile slander's dart
Returns to seek its owner's heart.

But the victim 'neath the chastening rod
Grows nobler, dearer to his God.

A KINGLY DEED

THE King rang for his little page,
He rang and rang in vain;
No answering footfall greets his ear,
His anger grows amain.

In haste he goes the cause to seek—
Asleep he finds his page,
So sweetly peaceful that it quells
The royal bosom's rage.

The moon shone on that radiant brow,
And on those lips a smile,
Forgotten are both King and Court
In dreams of home the while.

Of home and friends and childhood days—
A child he was once more
Enfolded to his mother's heart,
And happy as of yore.

But see! from out his pocket's folds
Has half escaped a note—
A word of love and counsel wise
His mother's hand had wrote.

The seal was broke, 'twas open wide,
The Monarch took and read:
"God bless you, son, for aiding me
To purchase needful bread!

"Be always faithful to your God,
And loyal to your King,
And Heaven shall see we want for naught
That earth to man can bring."

The Sovereign back the letter placed
And a bounteous gift beside
Of sterling gold, a glittering pile—
Then loud and stern he cried:

"What! must I ring and ring in vain?
My call wouldst disobey?
And lo! this gold I find with thee—
How came you by it, pray?"

"O Sire!" he cried, in blank dismay,
"A foe hath done this thing
To blacken me and mine for aye
Before our Sovereign King."

"Not so, my boy!" the King replied;
" 'Tis God inspired the deed:
Send home this gift from us and say
Thy mother ne'er shall need.

"So long as she shall live on earth
And we a throne shall fill,
Pale want her cot shall never find—
Such is our royal will."

THE PASSING OF THE DEEPLY UNLAMENTED MR. STEPHEN TIGHTWAD

I

MR. Steve Tightwad was fond of the "dough"—
Old Tightwad;
To loosen a crumb, how consumedly slow
Was Tightwad.
His "sis" with her orphans called on him one day,
Their fiscal condition being in a sad way,
But he bade them all go to—well, distant Cathay,
Did miserly, heartless Steve Tightwad.

II

Next day he was found very dead in his bed—
Was Tightwad;
Ne'er a blessing was breathed by the poor o'er the head
Of Tightwad.
His heirs fell to scramble for Steve's yellow gold,
And it went "like the deuce," as the neighbors foretold,
While unheeded grew brier and weed o'er the mould
Of unblest and unmourned Steve Tightwad.

III

And where is the niggardly soul to be sure
Of Tightwad,
That was closed to the cry of the orphan and poor?
Say, Tightwad!
Were you welcomed by Lazarus on your death-day
To Abraham's bosom forever and aye;
Or are you, with Dives, not far from Cathay,
And having, like Dives, "the devil to pay"?
Oh! unfortunate Mr. Steve Tightwad!
Oh! woefully hapless Steve Tightwad!!
Oh! golden calf-worshiper Tightwad!!!

THE INEVITABLE

OH! to think that the grave is my doom!
That this body must moulder to clay!
That these eyes, sparkling bright,
Death shall seal to the light;
And no more shall they look on the day.

That this heart which is bounding with life,
In the fell grasp of Death's icy hand,
Shall grow pulseless and chill,
As the ice-fettered rill,
Or the weed the wave casts on the strand!

That this hand shall wax nerveless and stark,
Though its grasp be so lusty today;
And these limbs, young and strong,
That trip lightly along,
Must go down in the tomb to decay!

And this tongue, now so gladsome and blithe,
Whose accents to many seem dear,
Mute and withered must lie!
Who will then breathe a sigh
O'er my memory, or shed a fond tear?

Yet what matters it all, when this frame
Is coffined and laid 'neath the sod,
If the soul, on glad wing,
Be permitted to spring
Up, up to the bosom of God—
In the Eden of rapture and bliss,
In the kingdom unmarred by a grave;
Side by side evermore
With the loved ones of yore,
And the souls that we labored to save.

THE LONE EAGLE

IKE a bird soaring high at the dawn of the day,
Bold Lindbergh sweeps out o'er the ocean's cold gray
Through a thousand leagues lacking or respite or stay—
Right on and away and away.

Though ominous moanings come thick on the breeze
And dense, chill and dark grows the mist of the seas,
And Fate seems to herald her deadly decrees,
Yet onward undaunted he flees.

O Lindbergh, brave Lindbergh! how boldly you ride
Through oceans of azure, uncharted, untried,
The frail spinning needle your solitant guide,
For the stars in the skies are ahide!

The sun, to the deep the winged Icarus cast,
But never the sun, nor the rage of the blast
Could lower Hope's flag you had nailed to the mast
As you speed like a bolt through the vast.

Is it land or mirage that breaks full on your sight?
'Tis the green shore of Erin so smilingly bright—
Into Gaul then you shoot, like an arrow in flight,
With the sunburst of glory bedight.

ODE TO MUSIC

USIC, sweet music! The language of Angels!
Soft breathings celestial o'er Nature's vast span!
What mystical magic, what fairy enchantment
It weaves round the inmost emotions of man!

Ah! Let but some notes of "the long ago" vanished
Fall on our ear, and what joyful delight!
Fond memory summons afresh to our vision
The dreams of our youth, again golden and bright.

Zephyrs most grateful come filled with the fragrance
Of flowers that bloomed in field, woodland and dell;
And the songs of the birds, streams and rills of our boyhood
Come mingled with chimes of the sweet vesper bell.

Of nurses the sweetest, most gentle and tender,
Thou speedest thy coming when nought will avail;
With the tone of thy croon thou the fretful babe soothest,
Its eyelids sleep visits refreshing and hale.

Like a bird of rich plumage dost thou tenderly hover
O'er the infant's sweet spirit as it visits the land
Where dreams are the brightest, and fairies are fleetest—
There it roams with the cherubs bright, hand clasped in hand.

But who will dare limit the power of music,
With its melting, mysterious and magical spell?
Steel and stone bow before it, the oak and the lion;*
Despair it can charm, and madness can quell.

Thy martial strains, Music! can stiffen the sinews,
And turn the timid into warriors brave;
Where sabres clash fiercest, and death's shafts fall thickest—
They battle, their homes and their altars to save.

The rage of the tempest of deep hate and envy—
How oft it was calmed in King Saul's tortured mind,

And plannings of evil plucked forth from his bosom
By David's rich harpstrings with song intertwined.**

Enchantress of mortals! Thy harmonies wondrous
Search keenly the windings and fibres of life.
Thou art balm to the soul struck by grief's bitter arrow;
Into love thou canst soften the hatred of strife.

Of all Heaven's gifts unto mortals, O Music!
Thou art one of the fairest and dearest and best;
When other arts leave us thou ne'er wilt forsake us—
Is not music divinest in the land of the blest?

*Horace, lib. 1, 12.
**I Kings, 16, 23.

MAGNIFICAT

HEN the Eternal Artist tinged
With azure bright the new-made sky,
His magic brush retained some drops
A modest flower to beautify
When, at His all-creative Will,
The bloom should bud in infancy.
How sweet the boon from God's own Hand
Enhancing life—in love 'twas planned!

In humble sentiments profound
The violet bent adoring head,
And poured its soul in fragrancy
As grateful incense from its bed,
Sweet-circling up unceasingly
To Him whose skill its azure spread—
And thus this modest bloom for aye
Is wed to fair Humility.

E'en like that lowly violet—
When God's Archangel came to bring
Judea's peerless Virgin-flower
The highest gift from Heaven's King;
Seeking humility's abyss,
"Magnificat" she fain would sing.
O matchless one! Immaculate! alone!
Destined to fill the Queen of heaven's Throne!
While bask the blessed in thy glory's blaze
Let earth and Heaven proclaim thy endless praise!

THE GENTLE DEWS OF GRACE

OW softly falls the gentle rain
Pattering music on the pane,
Falling on the parched earth
That blooms may spring anew in birth.

So fall the dews of grace divine,
Stirring deep your soul and mine,
To have them bear, in contrite hours,
Fair Virtue's golden fruits and flowers.

THE FREED SPIRIT

Written in honor of Rev. D. Giaccobi's sixty years in the Society of Jesus. 1868-1928

THE chrysalis within its shell
In fettered torpor sleeps;
But, waking, spurns its prison-cell—
To light and life it leaps,
And darts along in purest air—
A thing of joy and beauty rare.

Its wings are gossamer fine-spun
With threads of rainbow hue,
All sparkling in the noonday sun,
More glorious to the view.
Than Solomon could emulate
In all his royal pride of state.

A faerie Queen, disdaining earth,
It flits from flower to flower
To sip sweet nectar in its mirth
While shines the sunlit-hour—
The chrysalis, once dull and wry,
Is now the gorgeous butterfly.

And thus 'tis with the blessed soul—
When loosed from fleshy bond
It enters on a regal role
All earthly dreams beyond.
The Deity, the soul endowers
With newborn qualities and powers.

With lightning speed it now can trace
Its flight from star to star;
Its range through all the worlds of space
'Tis only God can bar;
Its brilliancy our minds descry,
Its beauties with the angels vie.

A spark of God's Sublimity,
The very seal thou art
And image of Divinity—
The reflex of His heart.
Possessing Him, the boundless Good,
Thy bliss complete—an ocean flood.

EXCELSIOR

AWAY, giddy dances, gay revels, vain pleasures,
With your sad train of evils of body and mind!
Too long as your votaries—too long have you held men
In chains, not less binding though flower-entwined.

For aye shall I flee your false glamor fantastic,
With you let the sons of frivolity bide;
Ah! give me to roam o'er the mountains and valleys,
And let me commune with the stars and the tide.

What pleasure to con the bright pages of nature,
And lessons of wisdom from them to imbibe;
What rapture to soar up to nature's Creator
Whose goodness and beauty no tongue can describe!

Ah! here is true freedom, and here is true pleasure,
To dwell on the beauty of the Fountain of Love;
And sigh for the day that will free the winged spirit
To fly to its home in the kingdom above.

TRUE FRIENDSHIP

AS memory's barque doth bear me back
O'er time's fast-flowing tide,
There's one I love to greet again—
He was my friend and guide.

A friend he was both staunch and true—
Oh! what an untold treasure!
My other self—two souls in one—
His value, who could measure?

Like David's friend, he heartened me
When prospering gales were failing;
And joyed, the while my gallant ship
Before the wind was sailing.

My name—were it a theme of praise,
His heart with joy went bounding;
Were it assailed, a lance he'd wield
Vile slander's shafts confounding.

Himself the soul of sterling worth—
Of endless joy the fountain—
He loved to point the glorious way
To Virtue's shining mountain.

Not all the wealth the world might hold
Could bribe him to betray me—
But summer friends, they're winter vanes;
How false! alas! they've played me!

True friendship—mighty oak of age—
Its ties no power can sever;
Though fortune frown and slander smite
A friend's a friend forever.

A BARTERED BIRTHRIGHT

OW sad fall the tears o'er the follies of youth!
What sighs rend the breast that has strayed from the Truth!
Fond memory brings back a comrade most dear
Who entered the path of the gay cavalier;
He spoiled every gift Heaven lavishly gave,
And lies all unhonored in a premature grave.

What errors are his who would wholly despise
The counsel of elders, the words of the wise!
While he fain would be free, Passion forges a chain
That holds him fast bound in dark slavery's train.
Ah! what anguish of spirit will seize him at last
When the shadows are lengthening and life is nigh passed
To find that, for love of a mere earthly clod,
He bartered his birthright in the Kingdom of God.

TO REV. RICHARD A. GLEESON, S. J.

1877-1927

THE Golden Jubilee, O loyal son
Of great Loyola, glad we celebrate
On the Occasion of the Golden Jubilee of His Entrance
Into the Society of Jesus
Of that auspicious morn which brightly smiled,
E'en fifty golden years ago, upon
Thy primal generous step athwart
The hallowed threshold of Loyola's home.

Thy life since then and deeds of high emprise
Thy modesty forbids us to disclose.
Nor could we, if we dared the task essay—
A task in sooth too vast for human pen.
To thy Recording Angel all is known
And noted for supernal recompense.

Meanwhile be our united ardent wish:
That this thy glorious Golden Jubilee
May win for thee a foothold firmer still
Yea, most secure in Heaven's Vestibule!
And when, some distant day, that foothold fail—
Oh! then forever may it planted be
Within those jasper gates where all is bliss!

Nor in that final conquering step be thou
Alone and unattended. Rather far—
Like unto Christ when erst He rose to fill
The Throne Divine—of souls, immortal souls
Who but for thee were lost, bring gladsome galaxy.

THE FIRST OF THE SEASON

WAS April Fool day and old Sol had begun
To paint up the eastern skies;
His beams through the shutters stole into my room
And danced on mine eyes.

With a start I awoke, then I gazed all around—
Oh! horrors! what's that I see there?
No, no—'Tis a dream as fantastic I trow
As Poe's raven's glare.

Not so! There he sits perched on high o'er my bed,
And armed, good heavens! cap-a-pie;
And see him awhetting his sharp-pointed blade,
His optics on me.

Thundering zounds! How sardonic he grins
While he winks quite familiar and gay;
And his lips with a zest and a gusto he smacks,
As one who would say:

"Don't worry, old pal, I'll get you, be sure."
A moment I shuddered—but then
My choler arose, my thews stiffened to bronze,
I felt equal to ten.

Never did feline on victim foredoomed
Approach with a stealthier tread,
Than I on this treacherous, murderous foe—
His crimson to shed.

Than lightning more swiftly my swift blow descends—
Ha! villain, I've crushed you to dust!
Great guns! Have I missed him? What! view him up there,
Like a demon "accussed."

"April fool!" cries he, mocking, while his eye flashes fire;
And he hurls defiance along!
Now gleeful, triumphant, in raucous jazz tones,
Hear him chant my death-song.

Mosquito! thou blood-hound! thou fiendish vampire!
Whose dreams are all crimsoned with gore,
I swear not to rest—my pestiferous pest!—
Till thou art no more.

WHY LACK A FRIEND?

THERE'S a smile on the face
Showing goodness of heart,
There's a grasp of the hand
That can friendship impart;
There's a light in the eye,
And of magic 'tis wove,
That will thrill to the core,
That will kindle to love.

Then, why should a friend
Who is true, lack a friend
To love and be loved
Unto life's latest end?
Yea, why should those loves
That are sacred e'er sever,
But live on and love on
In the bright skies forever.

THE SAVIOUR IN THE GARDEN

I.

IT was the night's last watch. The hush of death
Was on the scene. The gladsome night-bird e'en
Was seated sad upon a noteless bough.
Oppressive was the stillness—ominous—
As tho' it held all nature in its thrall.

II.

But who approacheth with so firm a tread,
So sad of mien, and yet so fair withal?
'Tis He, "The fairest of the sons of men":
And willing comes He now to meet his doom.
He opes the garden-gate and enters in.
How waxen pale his brow the moon reveals.
What weary heaviness weighs down his heart!
And o'er his spirit steals a woeful sense
Of utter loneliness—abandonment—
As if the pulseless universe lay dead.

III.

His great strong heart a prey to human fears,
And lo! beneath the olives, on his face
He prostrate falls; The mighty cedar prone!
He, He the Strong One humbled to the dust!
The trembling beams of the round paschal moon
Are softly stealing thro' the silvered leaves
To pityingly caress the prostrate form,
So crushed to earth beneath the mountain-weight
Of man's unnumbered and most heinous deeds—
Which he hath ta'en upon Him to atone!

IV.

Ay, how they press Him down with leaden weight
And wring from out His heart the piteous cry:
"If it be possible? O Father! let
This chalice pass from Me—yet not my will
But Thine be done!"—As Jacob strove of old
And wrestled with the angel until dawn:
So now, the deadly cup of human guilt,

Hard tugging at the heart-strings of his life,
He grasps and freely drains unto the dregs.

V.

Still paler waxes He and fainter grows.
A crimson dew starts out at every pore;
It beaded stands upon his marble brow,
Athwart his blessed face He draws his hand:
All crimsoned is his sacred palm—'tis blood.
The Saviour's red life-stream is breaking through
The walls of its canals, His poor bruised Heart
O'erwhelmed perforce with sorrow's surging tide.

VI.

What marvel then that Christ is sweating blood!
The gathering drops are trickling one by one
Deep-crimsoning the earth. Oh! precious drops—
Ye rubies beyond price—spontaneous given
To ransom man from slavery's galling chains!
With your ten thousand tongues ye loud proclaim
The Saviour's burning love for all mankind!
Thou primal flow of his life-giving Heart,
Though yet untouched by scourge or nail or thorn!
Redeeming dews upon the fruitful soil
That there might bloom full fair the crimson flower
Of man's Salvation!—Yea, the first sweet yield
Of that most generous Vine of priceless worth,
Ere yet the press hath bruised its purple grapes!

THE MASTER GLORIFIED

I.

AS David from Saul's envious steel
Was saved by Heaven for Juda's weal;
And Moses from the surging flood
Was rescued for his people's good;
And Joseph from his dungeon-grave
Arose, the famished world to save;
So Christ the crucified arose
In triumph o'er his mortal foes.

II.

When Easter dawn began to flush
The Orient skies with rosy blush
Forth from the tomb, in glory dight,
He rose triumphant, Lord of might.
Where now the anguish and the pains,
The scornful taunts and stripes and chains—
Where all that untold agony?
Yea, swallowed up in victory.

III.

See how, where erst the crimson tide
Forth gushed from hand and foot and side,
Now issue glories that outvie
The splendors of the morning sky.
The form that late was pale and gory,
Is radiant with the Godhead's glory;
Where anguish dire had stamped His brow
A crown of joy is resting now.

IV.

There, there He stands with new-found breath,
The Kingly Conqueror of Death,
And Nature's heart that mourned Him dead,
Rejoicing feels His living tread.
Judea's hills are bounding wild,
Exulting as a playful child;
While cedars crowning Lebanon's height,
Are waving their crests in the growing light;

And Sharon's roses, drooped erewhile.
Are dimpling bright with heaven's smile;

V.

And the rivers and brooks, from end to source,
Are leaping with glee along their course;
And Galilee's waves that wailed Him sore—
Oh! there's music and song on that sacred shore;
And the sun that was mantled in sorrow's gloom
Is dancing in joy at the empty tomb.
With harp and voice the angels raise
Glad alleluias of praise;
And the Father's heart upon His throne,
  Exulteth in His Glorious Son
Who, entering on the strife alone,
  By His dear death redemption won.

VI.

See Him! In his beauty blending
All of heaven and earth! Transcending
Hosts celestial in his might!
And in His smile the Victor's light.
With loving eyes he gazes o'er
The world redeemed from shore to shore,
And stretches forth His arms to bless
Mankind with loving tenderness.

VII.

O Savior mine! O Master mild!
Bless every wandering mortal child!
Bless me! Bless all! Bless men unborn!
On this Thy resurrection morn;
And let Thy blessing ever stay
To guide us on our pilgrim-way,
Till dawns the first enchanting ray
Of heaven's eternal Easter day.

THE SANDS OF TIME

OW swift and silent run the sands of time!
With what soft tread each hour doth steal away!
As swift and silent nears the eternal clime—
The destined end of man's allotted day.

Yet who, I pray, would live forever here
Where reigneth such a dearth of true and good;
Where sin and strife abound with many a tear,
And hopes lie strewn on every tidal flood?

What marvel if a David and a Paul,
With fire divine within their glowing breast,
E'er harkened for the voice of Heaven's call
To doff this mortal garb, and be at rest!

Then why fear Death that so befriends the soul?
Life chains the soul to clay; Death bursts the bond,
And lends her wings to reach the blessed goal
Where joys abound, all human thought beyond.

KINGSHIP OF CHRIST

SPIRIT of the great Omniscient
Thou Light of Light, and endless
Source and Fount
Of knowledge, science, art and poesy!
Deign, I beseech, to cleanse and purify
This heart and mind from every dross terrene;
Enkindle this cold bosom's frosty clay
And make it burn with Thy celestial fire
Till the exalted spirit, eagle-like,
Shall full arise to the sublimity
Of this untempered theme divine, and sing,
Not all unfitly, of the Kingship great
Of Him the Man-God, the Eternal King!

But Heaven forgive the rashness of the thought—
For who of mortal men or angel choirs
Could fitly sing the splendors infinite
And Majesty divine of Christ the King?
Not though his lip and tongue were purified
And hallowed thrice with living coals of fire,
Snatched from a glowing Cherub-censer swung
Before the Throne of God upon the Mount.

Come then, expressive Silence that for aeons
Preceded lip and tongue and vocal sound
Enfolding all things before aught was made,
And destined to survive the wreck of worlds—
Yea, let thy eloquence, O Silence! hymn
The praise and glory of the King of Kings
Whose Throne, more lasting than the eternal hills,
Is planted on the holy Mount for aye;
Unto whose gentle Sceptre's sway all Kings
And princes, nations, tribes and tongues do bow
With humblest adoration most profound;
Whose Presence occupies all space, pervades
Existences, all motion wisely guides,
While His Almighty Hand all things sustains.

The earthly Monarch by a breath is made

And can but wield the Sceptre for a day—
But Thou by Nature art the King of Kings
Nor ere shall pass the Sceptre from Thy Hands
Nor Crown of universal power from
The glorious Brows of Thy Divinity.
Most absolute Thy rule and sovereignty,
Eternal Arbiter of Life and Death.
A sovereign here but rules a piece of earth—
Kingdom, State or principality—
While all things lie essential 'neath Thy feet;

"Thine the heavens are, and thine the earth,
The universe with all its fulness thine";
The shadow of Thy Greatness mantles all.
The King Thou art of truth and power and might
Of justice, peace and life, of grace and love.
And yet withal a King so mild and meek,
Benign, benevolent and loving-kind,
Divinely human, humanly divine,
That sang the royal Harpist, heaven-inspired;
"Rejoice shall all the Nations and exult,
The livelong day, in Thy sweet Countenance."—(Cf.Ps. 88)
"The Lord is clothed with beauty and with strength."—
(Cf. Ps. 92).

Let Science weigh the planets, measure tides,
And sound the deepest seas—but who, I pray,
Can measure Thy Immensity, O God?
Or who can fathom Thy Infinity?
Who comprehend Thy Majesty sublime?
Yea, verily, in contemplating Thee
The human reason reels, its thought is lost
And darkness falls upon the dazzled eye.
The splendors of Thy Majesty, great Lord,
Like to a tide, o'erflows Thy regal courts
And fills the universe with beams divine.
Compared to Thee, say, what are all the suns
And constellations bright that gem the skies
In swarms unnumbered as the ocean-sands?
Yea, what are heaven's countless Angel hosts?
Not e'en a dew-drop to a shoreless sea.

Then come, ye nations all, and glad rejoice!
Adore the glorious Kingship of the Lord,
Extol and magnify His sacred Name
The while you pledge Him endless fealty!
Aye, let Him reign the sole unrivalled King
Of every mind and heart.—Rejoice, rejoice,
And shout aloud with exultation's voice!
And ye Angelic Choirs, and all ye hosts
Of heaven, unite in joyous canticles
With vibrant harp and lofty organ-peal—
Your notes of jubilation's strain prolong
Till all the listening universe respond
In ardent, jubilant, adoring praise
To Christ the Man-God's Kingship all divine.

DIVINE PRODIGALITY

H! who shall sound the mighty vast
Of Thy Heart's Goodness, Lord of All!
Thy golden gifts on man are cast
Like some unending waterfall.

Thou couldst have given the fruit, dear God,
Without its bloom the eye to greet;
And made the rose spring from the sod
Devoid of fragrance heavenly sweet.

The woodland choirs—what man could dream
Such plumage of entrancing hue,
And songs whose notes might echoes seem
Of the land beyond the star-lit blue?

The shining tenants of the sea,
That mid the foam-tipped billows play,
Need *not* show glorious jubilee
In coats of gold and silver ray.

The cataract ne'er had pearly foam;
The starry pageantry above
Would ne'er have blazed the azure dome
If less for man had been Thy love.

Thy gifts come pouring beauteous, bright,
To cheer us through life's troubled way
Till dawns the fair, unclouded light
Of Heaven's calm, eternal Day.

The grateful homage of our soul
Shall *we* not bring Thee, bounteous Giver?
Let planets shine or thunders roll
Thine, thine we fain would be forever.

MEMORIES OF THE HEART

OME of my childhood, thrice dear!
Smiled on by heaven's blue skies,
Sheltered from care and from fear,
How my heart fondly back to thee flies—
Back through the nimbus of tears
That blinds like a mist on the sea,
Back o'er the mountain of years
That never can part me from thee.

Nightly I see thee in dreams,
Fair as in sweet long ago,
I list to thy musical streams
As on to the ocean they flow;
I saunter through meadow and brake,
'Neath the elms I recline as of yore,
I muse by the calm, friendly lake
That mirrors thy beauty, ashore.

The lost ones my soul most esteems—
O rapture! I once again see;
But ah! the day's wakening beams
Bid me yearn for them and for thee.
And where are the loved ones of old,
The friends of my long-faded youth,
More precious than treasures untold,
Dear to my bosom as truth?

The friend that was half of my soul,
Who was "more than a brother to me,"
As true as the steel to the pole—
That friend must I never more see?
And where is the sister I loved
And cherished since reason's first dawn;
As guileless as innocent dove,
As blithesome of heart as the fawn?

And the father that fostered me fond,
When a child on his bosom I lay,

And the dearest all others beyond—
My mother, where is she today?
Where, those who in childhood's swift hours
Sat beside me, or romped on the green,
Through days filled with sunshine and flowers,
And the skies bending o'er us serene?

How gleeful we tripped o'er the glade
And plucked the first primrose of spring,
Whose breath sweetly perfumed the shade,
Where the thrush loved to nestle and sing—
Where are they who so loving unsealed
Wisdom's fount, as with magical rod;
And the path to my vision revealed,
Which the true and the noble had trod?

* * * * *

In the darkness and hush of my room,
They all visit my fast-fading sight;
With the beams of life's sunset they come,
They breathe in the visions of night.
My hand, O they clasp with glad smile,
Their voices sound sweet as of yore;
How beaming their faces, the while
They bid me to Eden's fair shore.

Then take me, ye loved ones, away!
Take me where bliss never ends!
O, brook not the cheerless delay
That bids me still wail you, lost friends;
In the Kingdom beyond the deep skies,
I long with the Saviour to reign;
Where friendship's delight never dies,
And loved ones part never again.

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